# TRUE WEST

47305

April, 1975

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GREAT FALLS' FIRST BLACK COWBOY

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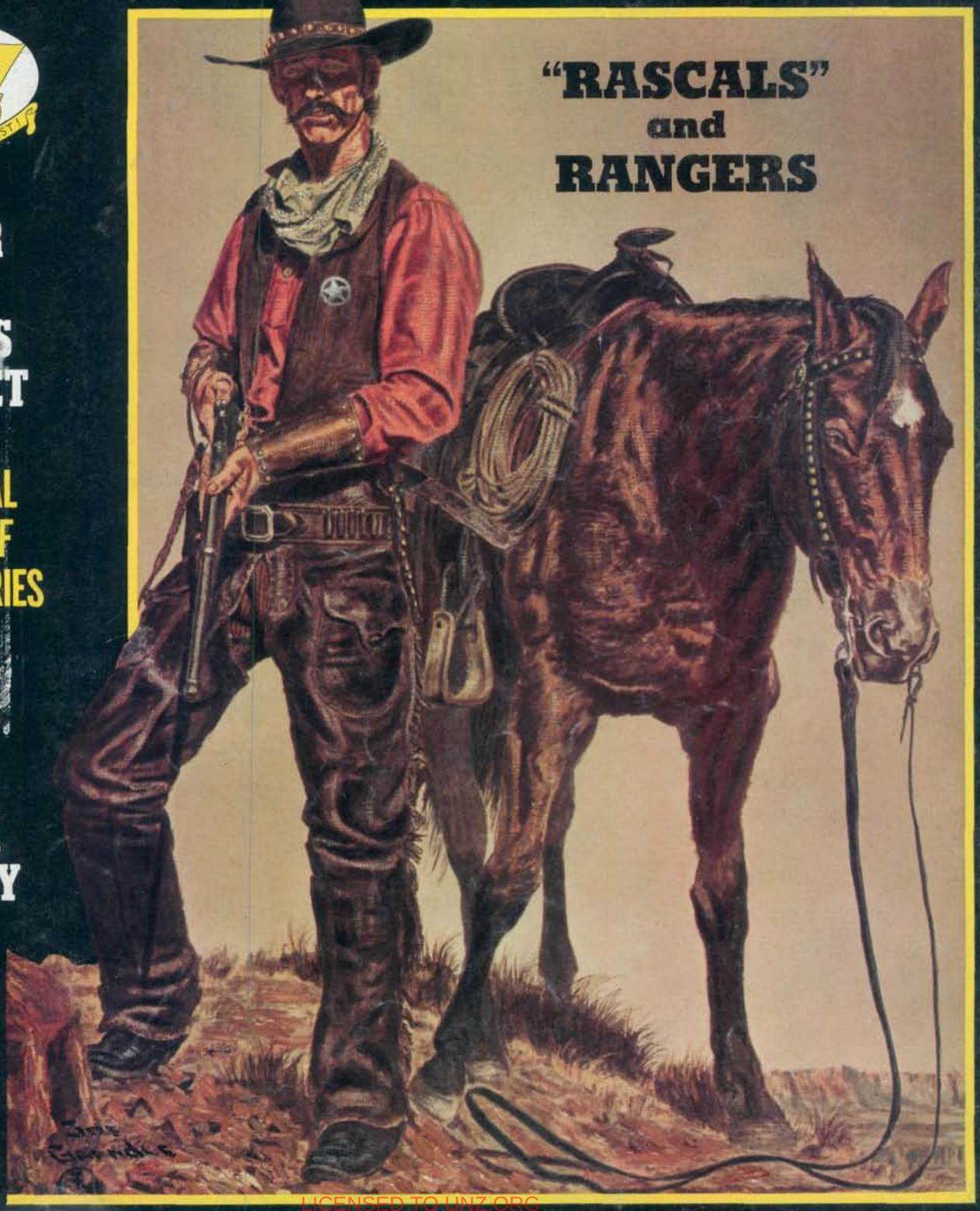


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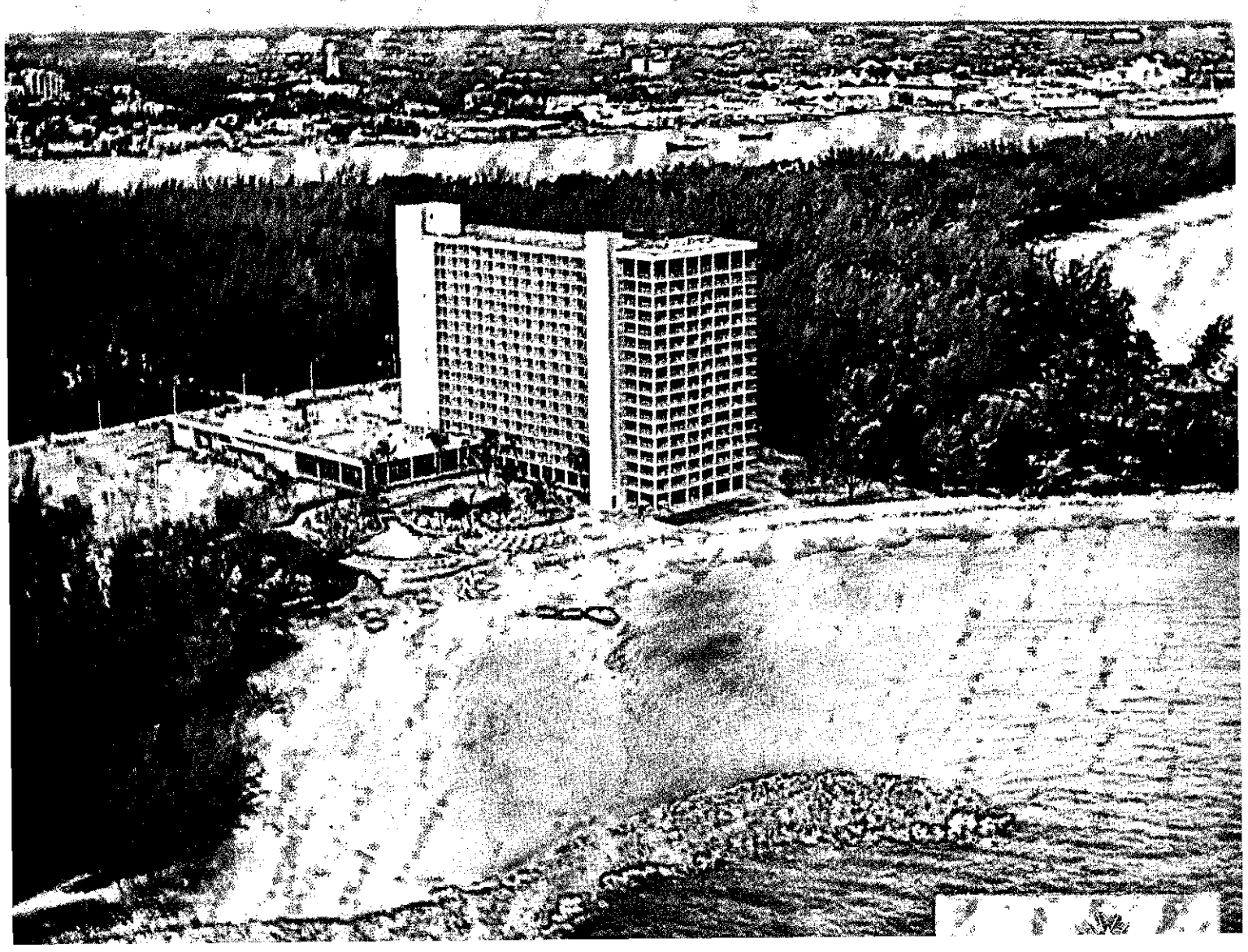

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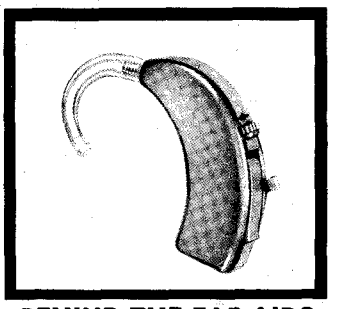

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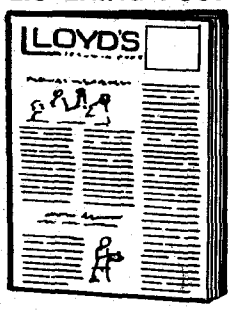


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A JOE SMALL PUBLICATION

March-April, 1975
Volume 22, No. 4
Whole No. 128


# True West

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*"The files of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES are going to be of great historical value and should be preserved in all the libraries of the country."*—Walter Prescott Webb, former President, American Historical Association.

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# You Be the Judge:

# SHALL WE KILL FRONTIER TIMES?

THE QUESTION is asked in all sincerity. It would be an unparalleled decision in the history of this company but drastic times call for drastic measures.

Seems like inflation, the constant rise in paper costs, postage *(nobody* seems to be able to do anything about that!) and the depression in general should be enough to be concerned about. However, if a man is going to do any worrying at all, he ought to get all of it in one sack and do his suffering up proper. I remember when I was writing stories to get through high school and college, I titled one MAN, IF YOU'RE GONNA CUSS —CUSS LOUD! So, if we're gonna have worries, we might as well worry right out loud and ask your advice as usual on especially big decisions.

This particular decision (on whether or not to continue with *Frontier Times)* lies almost entirely in the hands of *True West* NEWSSTAND READERS. From all the data we can get our hands on, it seems that most of you buy *True West* every issue and *Frontier Times* now and then. This sort of defeats the whole purpose—that is, to effect monthly publication. Material we use in *True West* and *Frontier Times* is *exactly the same* type and quality (one magazine is no better than the other)—but it sure is hard to put that point over! Instead of rehashing the whys and wherefors of our problems in keeping *Frontier Times* up with *True West,* I am just going to run the batch of questions at you that I asked *Frontier Times* readers. For gosh sakes, folks, if we've got any friends out there (and we're supposed to have a *few* at least!) drop us a line on what you think. It always has, and it always will, HELP TREMENDOUSLY! Now, here's the problem.

## VIQ

THIS is a VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION for sure! In fact, it may be one of the most important I have asked you readers during our stormy twenty-two years of publishing! Without any further fanfare, here it is pointblank—SHALL WE KILL OFF *FRONTIER TIMES* AND MAKE *TRUE WEST* MONTHLY?

Now that may be a shocker to you, but we have worried with the advisability of this particular thing since making *Frontier Times* and *True West* running mates. I have explained a number of times that keeping both magazines bimonthly would allow us to keep each on the newsstands twice as long and thereby create better sales. So, you have been getting *True West* one month and *Frontier Times* the next which should have worked out just beautifully, and it has in every respect but one—*Frontier Times* isn't and never has sold as well on the newsstands as *True West.*

That is the $64 puzzle. Several years ago I shot a series of questions at you relative to just WHY on this particular subject. We had all kinds of answers but none of them seemed to diagnose the ailment. Maybe there is no diagnosis other than the title itself. One publisher I know turns out two *identical* men's magazines. He puts the very same type and quality material in both, yet one title *consistently* outsells the other by 10%! This has been fairly common in the history of magazine publishing. Most companies just kill the title that is running 10% behind and make the other monthly.

However, killing *Frontier Times* would be sort of like stabbing an old friend in the back. The puzzle of why it isn't right up there in newsstand sales with *True West* may never be answered. *Frontier Times* is shoulder to shoulder with *True West* from a subscription standpoint SO IT IS YOU NEWSSTAND READERS WE NEED TO HEAR FROM.

Those who have been with us for a number of years will remember that I came out strongly on the fact that *True West* and *Frontier Times* were the *same* magazine—that we were putting them out every other month so that both could have two months sale on newsstands. I likened them to two bottles of wine, each being filled from the same cask but with different labels. We still have people writing in saying that *Frontier Times* is better than *True West;* while others prefer *True West.* It is seemingly impossible to put over the fact that a title is the only difference. I even switched contents of *True West* and *Frontier Times* at the very last minute on a number of issues and nobody ever noticed. We have made so many experiments that it just about *has* to be the title.

After all my reassurance that *Frontier Times* carries the same quality of material as *True West,* we had an upsurge in sales. Gradually, over the years, however, the same old percentage gap reappeared. The big difference now is that the situation is more critical today than it was then because a 7% to 10% difference in newsstand sales can mean the difference between loss and possibly a little profit. Many magazines are closing shop and practically all are getting a facelift one way or the other. Publishers are frantically testing new formats, contents, and everything else that goes into the make-up of a publication to see how the public reacts. They do this before *asking* their readers. By golly, I'm doing what I have done for twenty-two years —I'm asking *first.*

YOU will note I have talked over our immediate future with you in all three magazines recently. One question was about the rare *Old West* books. In short, would you like to see us bring them back even if we must print them in two or three parts? These scarce old books (the originals running all the way from $25 to $200 in cost) seemed very popular when we were reprinting them and I'd like to hear from you on that score also. Then, in the current issue of *Old West,* I asked about reprinting the valuable first editions of *True West.* We did this for a while and the *very issue* we started using all new material, sales dropped. It seems simple—go ahead and take up where we left off. We could cut out all old advertising, use only the best features and probably have room for five or six new articles since some of those older issues of *True West* were pretty slim. But I don't know whether it was the fact that magazine sales started dropping in general that caused our sales to drop at that particular time, or whether it was discontinuing reprinting the old unobtainable issues of *True West.* There again, some answers from you would be extremely welcome.

In short, we want to continue to publish the best dad-burned Western Americana magazines in the country and you readers being the most *discriminating* readers of Western Americana in the *world*—well, what better way can we find out and know for sure? You have always been not only willing but very eager to let us know about these things and it helps a tall heap.

The following is something I have been wanting to do for a long time. I may be throwing too many questions at you at one time—which is a bad rule to break—but who wants to go by rules anyhow? Most of them are so confounded stuffy. I would really like to know how many readers we have had since Volume 1,

*(Continued on page 61)*



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# Truly Western

### Fred Gipson Story

I hadn't thought of the kerless (or kellis) weed in years and years, but I have a fairly good reason to remember. I never saw the word in print or writing but the pronunciation as I recall was more like kellis.

In the spring, when it rained, that weed grew around the border of the garden and cow lot. When we lived in Coleman, Texas we always kept two, perhaps three pigs for butchering in the winter. There were two weeds that pigs liked to eat. One was what they called pursley and the other was the kerless (or kellis). My dad, or some other person with authority over me, and who seemed to enjoy making life miserable for a six- or eight-year-old boy, would have me pull some of those weeds now and then and feed them to the pigs. I presume they were considered to be a sort of conditioner.

The pursley had a single root system and spread flat over the ground with round flat leaves. The kerless (or kellis) grew up straight, something like a rag weed, but it was not a rag weed. Anyhow, the pigs liked it.—Walter W. Gann, 31662 Scenic Drive, South Laguna, California 92677

### Sandy Point, Texas

I was very interested in the history of W. S. Powell, of Meridian, Texas, which was written up in the reproduction of HUNTER'S FRONTIER TIMES, Volume 2, Number 4, January 1925. It touched on my family history. W. S. Powell and my great-grandfather John Kohut both served in the Confederate Army, but my great-grandfather died in active service.

W. S. Powell was mustered out of service at Sandy Point, Texas and that is where my great-grandmother is buried. The cemetery there is located in tall woods and pasture. No road goes into it now. It must have been a Confederate camp at one time, and later, a village.

I would appreciate any information on the history of Sandy Point, Texas.—R. W. Cervenka, 323 North Lakeview Drive, Waco, Texas 76705

### Old Trails

The article on page 40 of your April '74 issue, written by Clarence Fennell brought a great many memories from a distant past. The cover of the school souvenir was printed in red, white and blue colors. The only reason I can give for the use of the battleship was World War I. My mother was a member of the school board in Old Trails and I am the Charles Dryden listed as one of the pupils.

Another explanation of the reason for the name "Old Trails" was the fact that the village at that time was situated astraddle of what was known as the "Old Trails Highway." This highway was the route of several famous cross-country road races at the time, Barney Oldfield being one of the famous racers of the day. In a little town called Goldroads, about three or four miles easterly, many of the racers had to be pushed up Goldroads Hill by the willing hands of the spectators.

It is interesting to remember that Tom Fennell was the hero of the kids because he ran the bottling works. About that time a severe flood damaged his plant and washed away many bottles of his product.

My family moved from the area in the fall of 1919, shortly before Clarence's family moved, and settled near a village called Turkey Creek and another called Bumble Bee on the east side of the Bradshaw Mountains in Yavapai County. My elementary schooling was completed at Bumble Bee.—Charles W. Dryden, Box 999, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

### Jacob Rizor

In the June 1974 TRUE WEST is a story, "Lone Wolf of Wyoming," by Old Cowboy Ed Wright. I sure got a start when I read in this story where the sheriff searched the corpse and found a watch and some homestead papers stating Jacob Rizor had filed on a homestead in Alberta, Canada.

I have very good reason to believe this Jacob Rizor was my third cousin. Looking over our genealogy I find that Jacob Rizor was born about 1809-1811, was married to Jane Jordan August 14, 1841, and died March 12, 1883. Jacob Rizor was the third child born to George Rizor and Anna Margearet ——. George and Anna migrated to Iowa from Ohio and built the first house in Jefferson City, Iowa. This house has been moved to "Old Settlers Park" in Fairfield, Iowa.

I would appreciate hearing from Old Cowboy Ed Wright, or anyone else who can give me more information about Jacob Rizor or other relatives. I would also like to mention that while Jacob Rizor was riding across Nebraska, he found two old muzzle-loading pistols—one a flintlock converted to percussion made by A. Waters. Jacob gave this gun to my father, David Chester Rizor, in 1874, my father being eleven years old at the time. I now have this pistol. —Worth P. Rizor, 320 Piatt, Wichita, Kansas 67214

### Vasily "Harry" Dzaboff

The April '74 issue carried the story, "Angel of the Yukon." At last I was able to read the story that I had been told first-hand by one of the dog-team drivers. His account of course was sketchy as to the work and worry going on in Nome but, believe me, the part he played in seeing that the antitoxin reached there was as vivid in his mind as though it had happened yesterday.

Vasily Dzaboff left Russia hurriedly after the First World War, for the same reasons that many other White Russians did. Finding himself in Alaska he held various jobs—mining, railroading, logging—and as he told me, "anything to hold this frame together." He was a big man, and I always felt that very little if anything ever stood in his way. He was an intelligent man, as evidenced by the fact that he became a major road-building contractor in eastern Iowa a few years after the Nome epidemic. He left Alaska in the fall of 1925, coming to the Dubuque-Cascade area of Iowa. Depression reverses took their toll of his business, but he continued to operate the Dzaboff Lime Quarry until his death in the mid-1960s.

"Harry," as he was known to his many friends, often related his experiences in both Russia and Alaska, but I believe the serum run to Nome was his greatest. He stated that he and his team carried the serum 200 miles through uncharted and barren wilderness, with the temperature hovering between 40 and 50 below. While he was not in any great danger most times, a large pack of wolves did follow him the best part of one day. I always understood him to say that he passed the serum on to the final delivering driver, but Harry himself also continued with this driver on into Nome. He told me they received a welcome on arrival "fit for a king."

Mrs. Dzaboff is still living, residing in Wisconsin, and among her many treasures are the newspaper articles written of Harry and his many experiences.—G. L. Norlin, 323 North Chestnut Street, Monticello, Iowa 52310

### Place Names Mix-up

I am writing about "Remember When We All Actually Lived Someplace?" by Stephanie Cooper Shulsinger. I love to read about these places and how they got their names, but am a bit puzzled as to where she got her information on "Hisle (Washabough County)—an original name adapted from the last name of an early settler, William Highshield."

My parents, Mr. and Mrs. Olen Larmer of Hisle, South Dakota, in the year 1923 settled at the place later named Hisle and started a store and post office there. They sent several names into

*(Continued on page 64)*



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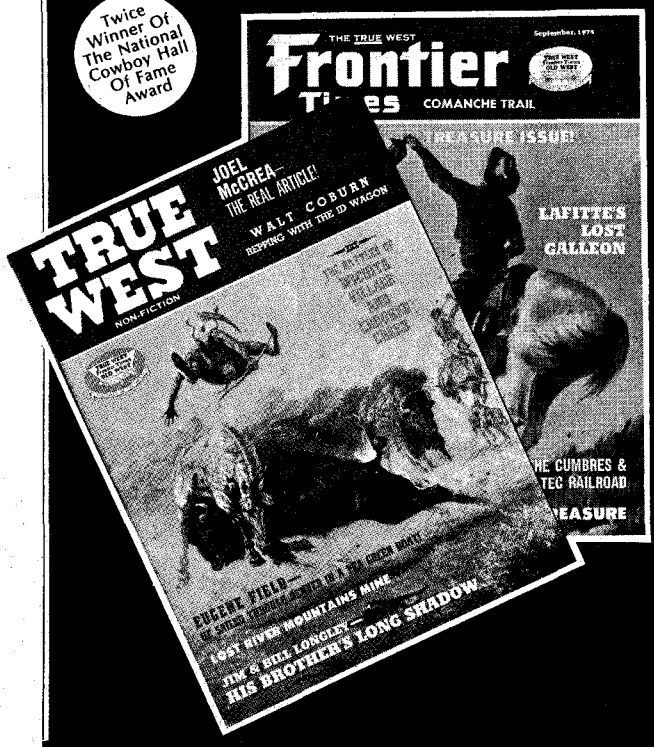


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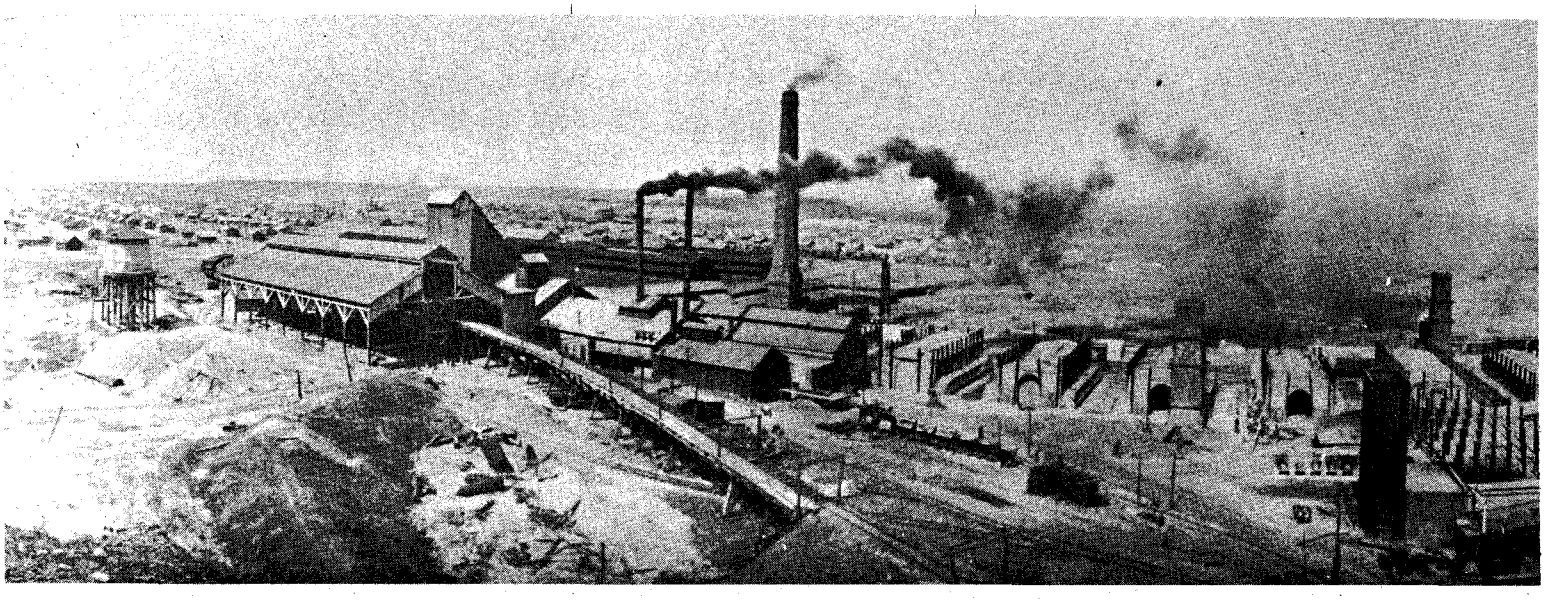

The James Green and R. D. Hunter Brick Company was incorporated in March 1897, and before summer ended it was producing brick. In 1900, the Texas & Pacific Coal Company bought a majority of the shares in the company. Bricks produced at this plant were used to pave Congress Avenue in Austin, Texas, and also in the construction of the sea wall at Galveston.

# "RASCALS" AND

## Hot blood coursed

By DICK KING
Photos Courtesy Author

**Ranger Captain J. H. Rogers was sent to Thurber in 1903 to keep the lid on a movement to unionize the Thurber miners.**

Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

ONCE A YEAR, the second Saturday and Sunday in June, Thurber, Texas bursts into life and sizzles like a firecracker, as it did when the census taker found 10,000 persons but not one homeowner living there. And the former residents who return to Thurber remember when the town's horseshoe bar in the Snake Saloon was the largest and busiest in West Texas, when residents were proud-chested about the four visits Texas Rangers made to quiet its rowdy miners. But that was a long time ago.

It began when William W. Johnson, an Eastern capitalist, signed a contract to supply the Texas and Pacific Rail Road with cross ties as its line stretched across north-central Texas. Searching for timber in the cedar brakes bordering Erath and Palo Pinto Counties, he stopped at a farmhouse to ask for water for himself and his mount. To pass the time of day, Johnson related some of his problems in finding the proper kind of wood.

The farmer, to uphold his end of the conversation, began telling of his own problems—especially his difficulty in digging the well that was furnishing Johnson and his horse some water. The farmer talked at length about a strata of hard black rock that he speculated might be coal.

Johnson was interested. With some training in geology, he too believed the land covered a good vein of coal, so he bought the property, thus relieving the

**Captain Bill McDonald was sent to Thurber in the summer of 1894.**

Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

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A group of Thurber residents and their kegs.

Courtesy Joe Martin, Sinton, Texas

# RANGERS

## through the coal veins at Thurber!

farmer—temporarily—of some of his problems.

In 1886, William W. Johnson and his brother Harvey sank a shaft, hitting a 26-inch vein of coal, exactly as the farmer had described. Soon miners came to the Johnsons seeking work, but the brothers' wage scale was too low. While the two parties negotiated, the miners pitched tents and built shacks and the Johnsons began construction on a few buildings to serve as mining headquarters and as homes for the office help.

Once the wage question was settled, the mine began yielding 400 tons daily. Officials of the Texas and Pacific built a spur to the Johnson property, and its locomotives became the big users of Johnson coal.

Yet in September 1888, the Johnsons announced that they were unable to meet the August payroll, so the miners laid down their picks and shovels. With relief, a month later, the Johnson brothers found a new owner for their mining enterprise—the Texas and Pacific Coal Company, whose officers were quick to point out that the name had nothing to do with the Texas Pacific Rail Road.

Edgar L. Marston, later president of the coal company, once explained, "Mr. [Jay] Gould doesn't own a dollar of stock in the company; neither does the T.P.R.R. Co., nor have they ever owned any interest in it. When we were organized at the old Mansion House in Fort Worth in 1888, we reached the question of a name. It was suggested that since the property was on the T.P. line we might name it the T. & P. Coal Co. The suggestion was adopted."

**Adjutant-General W. H. King ordered Texas Ranger Captain Sam A. McMurry to Thurber late in 1888. This was to be the first of several instances when the Rangers were called in to help.**

Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

What the Texas and Pacific Coal Company acquired from the Johnsons amounted to "rights, title and interest in what is known as the Pedro Herrera Survey, and the improvements thereon, comprising two thousand, three hundred and two and one-half acres located in Erath and Palo Pinto Counties" and a labor strike that would plague the new owner for years to come. The company soon acquired an additional 20,000 acres of land.

Miners striking against the Johnson brothers at the time of the transfer of property declared they were also striking against the Texas and Pacific Coal Company. In continuing against the new company, miners found themselves opposing Colonel R. D. Hunter, president, and they could not have found a more formidable foe. Born in Scotland, Hunter had come to America as a child. He had worked mines in Colorado, and he and a partner had operated a profitable livestock commission in St. Louis. Hunter had leased land in the Cherokee Strip of Indian Territory, stocked it with cattle, and lost a fortune. It was in the hopes of making a financial recovery that he turned to the Texas coal mines.

"I will run my business or run it to Hell," he said, and he made the miners aware of this attitude.

WHEN the company took possession on November 12, 1888 Hunter found 300 men of various nationalities on strike. They had been receiving $1.95 per ton of coal.

"My first action," he recalled, "was to post notices that any employes of the old company would be given work on personal application to the superintendent at one dollar and forty cents for coal-mining. We did not have an applicant.

"They took the advantage of having been on a strike with the Johnson Company and published to the world that



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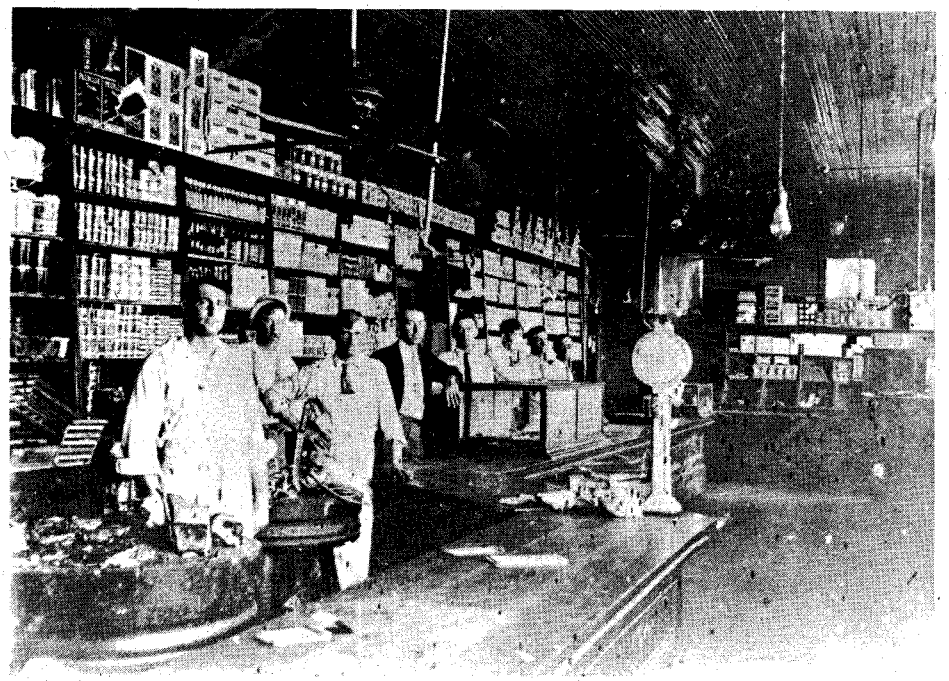

Courtesy Joe Martin, Sinton, Texas

**The grocery store operated by the Texas & Pacific Coal Company in Thurber.**

they were on a strike on account of reduction of wages by the Texas Pacific Coal Company. Steps were immediately taken to secure new men, and the second greatest battle with the Knights of Labor in the State of Texas began."

For nine months the mines remained closed. Arguing that the men could not be on strike against his company since they had never been on the payroll, Hunter demanded that miners reject their allegiance to the union and refrain from joining or assisting the union in any way.

When a committee of laborers called on Hunter, he stormed, "I'll make a dollar look as big as a wagon wheel to you before I get through with you."

In preparing his report at the end of the year, Hunter noted, "The miners decreed that the mines should not be worked. . . . Our superintendent and pit boss arrived December 20th, on the night of which, for purpose of intimidation and murder, the so-called strikers made an attack on the store and office where we were staying. This state of affairs continued until Christmas. . . ."

Two events worked for Hunter. First, company officials invited the *National Labor Tribune* to send a reporter to investigate the situation at company expense. William Rennie arrived at the mines late in December— only five weeks after the company had taken charge. In his story for the *Tribune* Rennie mentioned that the company furnished water free to miners and was sinking an artesian well, that the company had erected a number of two-, three-, and four-room houses and had stacks of lumber, windows and doors on hand for an additional fifty houses. These rented from $4 to $6 per month. He found the mines dry, and he learned that wages would be paid twice a month. The reporter questioned how the miners could be on a strike under union rules, and he urged workers not to overlook the chance to work in Thurber.

"Biased," miners said of the report claiming it did not present the truth of the Thurber situation. Their boycott was continued.

The second event that favored Hunter was a request by an Erath County judge that Texas Rangers be sent to Thurber to protect life and property. Adjutant-General W. H. King ordered Ranger Captain S. A. McMurry to the community; he arrived the last day of 1888.

When Captain McMurry learned of the difficulties Hunter experienced in getting laborers, he volunteered his services. He listened as the company president told how he had paid the transportation of a worker who, after arriving in town, refused to enter the mines. On another occasion one hundred Mexicans were hired, but they refused to sign the payroll.

In January Hunter went to Brazil, Indiana, to recruit. Upon his return he requested Captain McMurry to meet him in Fort Worth to see that strikers did not intercept the train. Half the incoming miners were black.

The Ranger noticed a labor agitator and several of his followers lounging in the Union depot. McMurry decided that the best action would be to see that the train did not stop in Fort Worth. With Hunter and two other company representatives, McMurry went to Dallas. They requested that the four special cars carrying men to Thurber be detached from the regular train a short distance from the Fort Worth depot.

Instructions were followed, engineers were changed, and in a short time the train went "straight through."

"I don't think Jackson [the labor agitator] and his crew 'caught on' for quite a while," McMurry wrote in the official report, "as they came down to our train just before it started; they walked to the rear end of the train. I followed a short distance behind them. They did not speak to me nor I to them. It seemed that they were anxious to do some dirty work; although they possess an unusual amount of 'gall' they did not attempt to get on the train. . . ."

**A panoramic view of Thurber, located in north-central Texas, in Erath County. This photo was taken in 1910, when the population was approximately 10,000. Built on the plan of Colonel Robert Dickey Hunter, the town was much like a socialistic state, all buildings being owned by the Texas & Pacific Coal Company. When the Texas railroads began to rely on oil instead of coal, Thurber was doomed.**

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Courtesy Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

**A group of Captain Sam McMurry's Company B Texas Rangers at Thurber in 1889. The lady, center, with broom is Mrs. Platt, wife of Ranger Sam Platt, fifth man from left.**

AFTER the train reached Thurber, however, many of the white miners refused to work and, instead, joined the strikers. A majority of the blacks went to work, but not without problems. Word spread through the mines that the blacks were professional strike-breakers.

Hunter had another opinion. He reported that of the 172 miners brought from Indiana, only 54 were white. "The black men remained faithful to their work," he wrote, "and experience has shown that they give less trouble and are easier to please than the foreign element which predominates among the white miners."

Hunter estimated that the company already had spent $10,833.64 on transportation in its attempt to recruit employes.

On April 6, 1889 Captain McMurry wrote General King that the company was producing approximately 200 tons. There were 35 to 40 strikers "still hanging around the outside of the inclosure" and they had been making a strong effort to create a mob spirit and to "try to stampede the Negroes."

McMurry reported May 23, "Everything is getting along pretty well here, but is not in shape to have my men moved away yet, this is a hard case—something like 'slow fever.' " In June he charged a number of strikers "with Rioting, Intimidation, Carrying pistols, etc. I don't think they can hold out much longer. We arrested 5 or 6 of them this morning."

Yet the miners continued to hold out, and on July 2 Captain McMurry observed "strikers still remain in force on the outside, praying for the Rangers to be moved away. . . ." Miners claimed that they soon could get clear of "old Hunter" and the blacks, were it not for the Rangers.

On July 8, 1889 Captain McMurry left Thurber, but he detailed four or five Rangers to remain and maintain order. "For important services at widely distant points east and west along the line of the Texas & Pacific Railway," General King praised McMurry. "For more than a year a large part of this company had to be kept on duty at the coal mines in Erath County, to keep the peace and prevent violence and possible bloodshed. . . ," he wrote.

For a time peace and tranquility prevailed at Thurber. Hunter figured that the strike had cost his company $30,000 in cash and $50,000 or more in loss through delaying the operation. Without a doubt, the first several months of ownership influenced Hunter regarding the type of community in which he would shape Thurber.

Recruiters from the coal town's early days were responsible for its melting-pot flavor. Italians, Mexicans, Irish, Ger-

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mans, English, Poles, Chinese, Slavs, Bohemians, and Welshmen had answered the call.

The Polish settlers stubbornly clung to their native customs. Following the exchange of marriage vows, a Polish couple, followed by friends, would ride in a buggy to the home of the bride's parents for a wedding feast. Here hundreds of guests were served three meals a day as long as the celebration lasted. Pastries, beer, wine, whiskey, meats, and traditional Polish dishes were kept on a plank table. Antoine Dudko described the spread as resembling a smörgasbord—an array of pastry, a variety of meats, breads, salads, and fruits. A family of means took this method of displaying affection for the daughter—the greater the wealth the greater the amount and variety of refreshments at the bridal reception.

Night meant a wedding dance in the home of the parents or in the community hall. Joe Martin of Sinton, a former Thurber resident, recalls, "The Poles would eat, drink and dance for three or four days. Sometimes wind up in a battle royal, too, and I believe the weddings were sometimes arranged by parents. You know—match-making, like European royalty."

Each bride collected a stack of cheap dinner plates in the dance hall. Before a man could dance with her or one of her attendants at the reception, he was required to throw a silver coin with enough force to break a plate. A silver dollar was the recommended coin, and the wise bride chose her bridesmaids with an eye to the budget. All money taken in at the reception went to the bride to spend as she wished—to pay for the wedding or to set herself up in a new home.

Since the bride also danced for a dollar, a Thurberite once commented, "I heard of one bride who danced till she died."

THE Italians transplanted much of the sunny Mediterranean to Erath County. To them two things were essential—a cellar for wine and an outside oven for baking bread. And because they were wine drinkers who preferred the produce of California grapes, Italians in Thurber often had trainloads of them shipped from the West Coast. Italian youths—who frequently had fresh grapes in their lunch pails—were the envy of schoolmates.

Like their Polish neighbors, the Italians also held big celebrations at weddings. A special rice dish, rizzotto, was served. The rice was cooked in large black washpots, into which went gallons of chicken broth, giblets, tomato sauce, and grated cheese. With rizzotto, a salad, a variety of meats, and wine were served. As the wine kegs were emptied during the feast, they were stacked outside the door, and the success of a social event was measured by the pyramid of empty kegs.

Burials frequently were followed by dances. Mrs. Henry Latimer recalls that when some former neighbors lost a child, the family returned from Graveyard Hill, an accordion player struck up a tune, and the grieved family and friends staged a dance. Polish residents observed traditional wakes, remaining with the bodies for two or three nights. Graves were dug only at night.

The eve of the Lenten Season was observed by many Italian families with a miniature Mardi Gras. The men dressed in costumes and masks, going from house to house entertaining children. Each housewife in whose home the jesters visited served wine and crostoli, a special pastry which required almost an entire day in its preparation.

Almost every Italian home had a boarder, so there was an outdoor oven made of brick, stone, and clay, resembling an Eskimo igloo in shape. Some Italian women who had several boarders served meals in tents outside their houses. "They would build a big wood fire in the oven and when it was white hot, pull the fire, clean off the brick or stone, and put in bread or even pies or meat," remembers Joe Martin. They baked once a week, the average oven holding from fifteen to eighteen large, round loaves of bread. Dudko recalls that large wooden paddles were used for inserting the loaves into the hot ovens.

"New bread and old wine" went together in the minds of Italian miners, so their homes had large ice boxes to accommodate kegs of beer and wine. Each night the miners tapped a keg, and Saturday night called for tapping and draining several.

As the town grew, company carpenters were allowed their own judgment in determining the site of a new house; as a result, houses often were "out of line" with neighboring structures, Sometimes front doors of one house opened onto the back door of another. Homes were painted red, green, dull yellow, and gray. The rocky soil made lawns impossible, but many of the houses had red picket fences, for which the company made an additional charge.

FREE!!

COME ONE! COME ALL!!

Bruce and Stewart will give you all the beer you can drink for nothing and the best beer in the country at that.

Boys drink with us, we are among you, we are one of you, we treat you right.

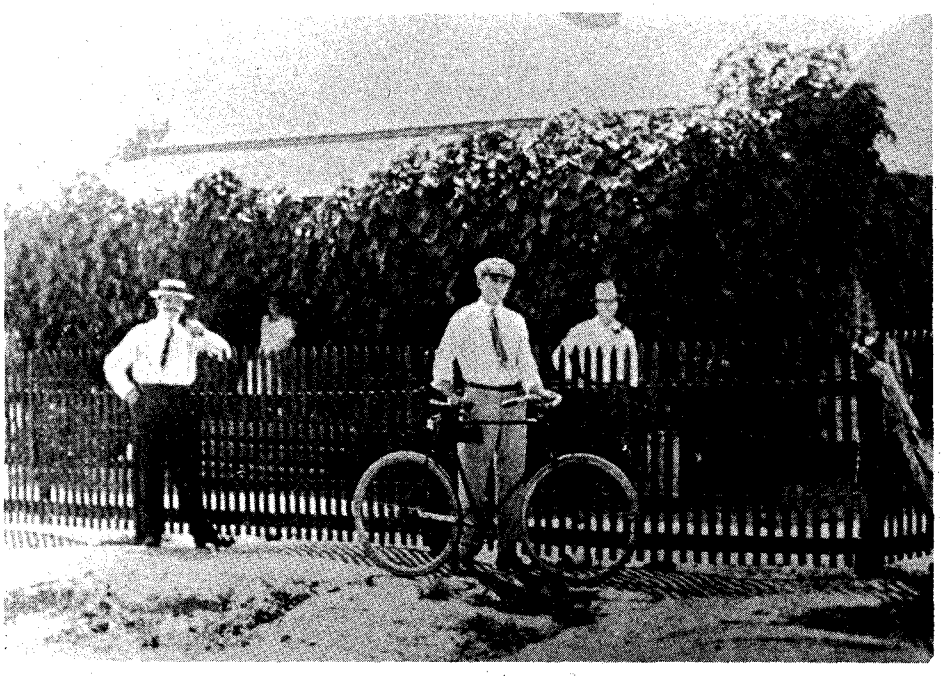
We will give free beer to the public from twelve o'clock, noon, until 9 o'clock at night, on next Saturday, June 2nd, 1894.

Saloon just outside of the wire.

BRUCE & STEWART.

**The free beer promise posted in Thurber.**

**Several "Thurberites" pose in front of one of the miner's homes. The red picket fence, for which the company charged extra, is shown.**



ON July 5, 1890 Colonel Hunter called on General King to send Captain McMurry again, for strikers continued to loiter in the area, making threats.

"I ask for a little assistance if you can . . . give it," Hunter wrote the adjutant general. "Please send me Captain McMurray [*sic*] and a few men. He as I before said has saved plenty of blood shed, and his presence here with a squad of men in my opinion will do it again. I am not an alarmist but I do not think there is any time to lose. There is a lot of bad men hanging around here with there [*sic*] arms on there saddles. Some of them are well known horse thieves and ex convicts, who are friends of the old strikers. Who are ready to commit any crime at a moments notice."



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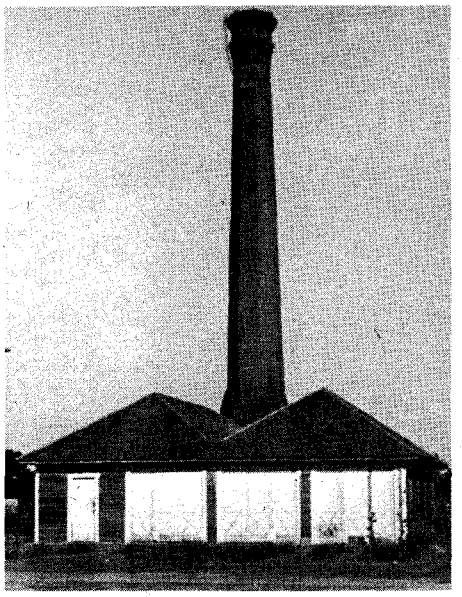


**Smokestack near Thurber's square as it looked in the 1940s.**

One miner was arrested for drawing a pistol on a black. The following day the same miner was arrested on a similar charge. So on July 10, Ranger McMurry returned to Thurber. Two days later he reported, "There has been considerable disorder and there is a very 'hard' set in this community."

After the Rangers were pulled from Thurber this second time, order prevailed though general discontent remained. Then in the summer of 1894, Colonel Hunter turned his ire from the laborers in the mines to the owners of a saloon on the edge of Palo Pinto County. Hunter appealed to Adjutant General W. H. Mabry, explaining, "Although our men have not struck and are still at work, the striking miners from the Territory and else-where, are sending their walking delegates in here in a clandestine manner and are trying to create a strike. Three of the rascals have been arrested and put under bond, but they keep sending more, and while our people are trying to work, they have been terrorized in a great degree."

Mabry dispatched Captain Bill McDonald of Company B Rangers to look over the situation. What McDonald learned was this:

Two men, Bruce and D. W. Stewart, had opened a saloon three-fourths of a mile from Thurber. They had rained leaflets on the mining settlement encouraging the workers to visit their place of business. They offered free beer—and the miners accepted.

While in the saloon, miners were encouraged to strike against the coal company. It was hardly necessary; so many miners accepted the offer of free beer that drunkenness began interfering with their ability to mine coal. And concern rose among other miners that the mines might be dynamited. There were reports that some men had threatened those miners who would not quit work, and similar threats were hurled at some of the laborers in their homes at night.

W. K. GORDON, general manager (who kept in shape by a daily workout with a punching bag), grew alarmed over the rumored threats. An outspoken man, honest, cultured, he was ready to fight for what he considered just, and miners were aware that he could exercise his power through both his brains and his brawn. He reported to company officials that those miners who frequented the saloon returned to camp yelling, shooting off guns, and creating a disturbance. Many of them were incapacitated for work for several days.

"A man who has been on a spree is unfit for mining work, and it is very dangerous indeed to allow him to go into the mines," Gordon explained.

Hunter promptly issued strict orders that no man be permitted inside the mines if he were drinking or in a drunken condition. He also told bartenders of the two company-owned saloons, the Snake and the Lizard, to refrain from selling liquor to any company employe who had been drinking to excess.

In retaliation, Bruce and Stewart brought suit against Hunter, charging that he deliberately had closed a public road because it passed within a few yards of their premises.

It all began in 1892 when Jimmie Grant operated a saloon in Erath County. After his establishment had been raided because of gambling, Grant moved into Palo Pinto County, placing his saloon on the wagon road that ran from Thurber to the main track of the railroad. Then the road was ordered closed.

It was explained that the road was so near the tracks as to be hazardous. Colonel Hunter stated, "I have often had to drive horses out of the road and into the brush myself until the train would pass." Actually, two months before Grant opened his saloon, Hunter had ordered the road closed because of its proximity to the tracks. "This was not a public road," he insisted.

"When the road was changed the saloon was still being run by Grant," Hunter said. Bruce and Stewart took over the saloon a year later.

KNOWN throughout the Southwest as the "best all-around rapid-fire marksman in the State," McDonald was mild in manner and gentle in speech. He was in Fort Worth when his orders came to report to Thurber. Once in the mining camp, he called at the company offices. Colonel Hunter looked up from a ream of paper to see the Ranger, "bent over from his wounds and battered up from illness and exposure."

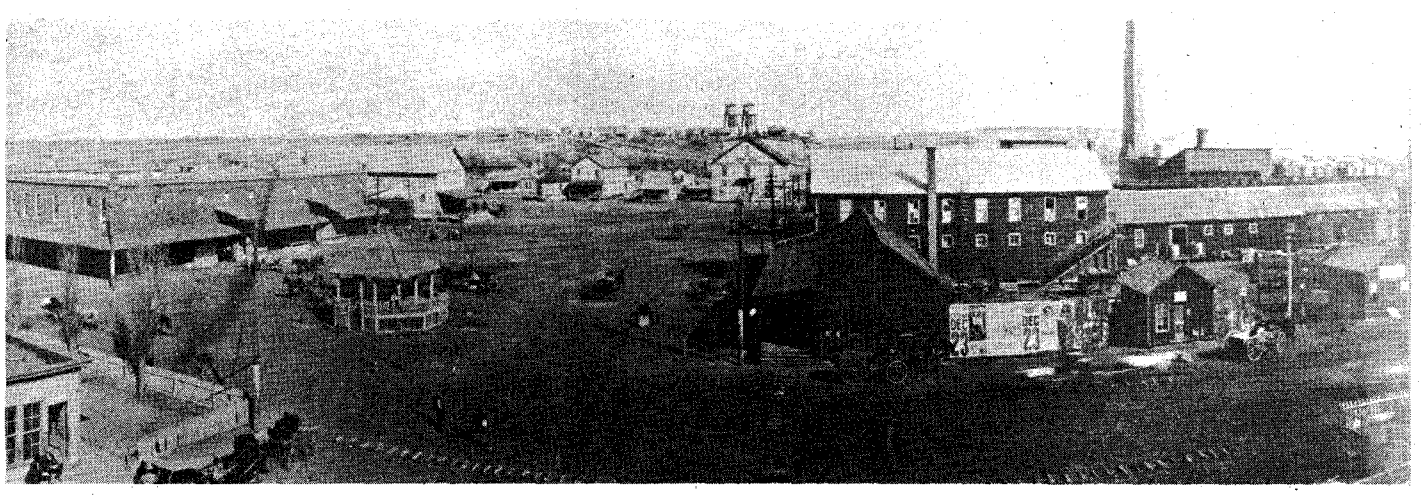
"You should have brought your men," Hunter told the Ranger captain. "You can't do anything with a gang like ours alone."

Slowly, deliberately, McDonald answered, "Well, Colonel, I'm using my men in other places. I'll look around a little and do what I can, anyway."

As leisurely as he spoke, McDonald strolled around the community. He discovered that a number of kegs of beer were being moved to a hill on the outskirts of town and that a meeting had been called that night, to be attended by some labor leaders. McDonald decided that he, too, would attend.

After dark he walked from the Hotel Knox. A crowd already had assembled on the bald hill half a mile from Thurber. A misty moon lighted the log on which agitators stood to address the crowd. Unnoticed, Captain McDonald remained on the fringe of the gathering.

**Thurber Square. In the center is the bandstand, which was moved to Stephenville years later. Photo was provided by the late Hazel Miller, a long-time Thurber resident.**





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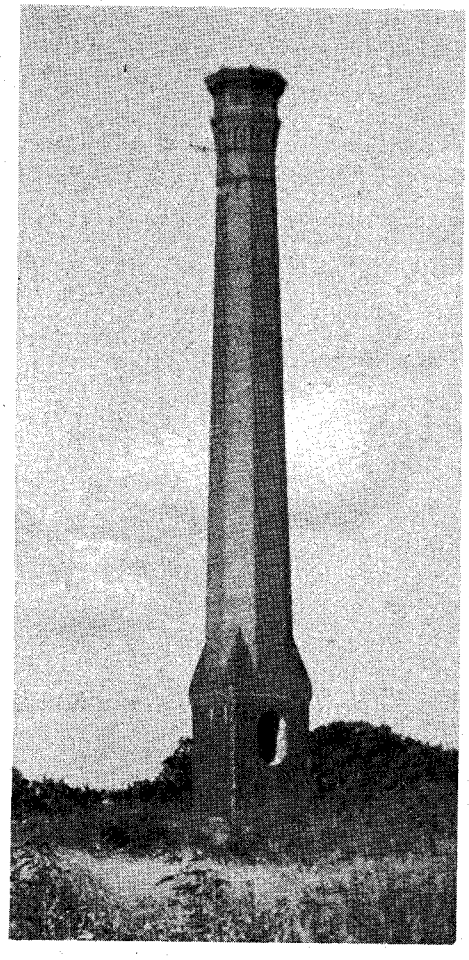
**View of the coal town provided by the late Mrs. Hazel Miller.**

At 11 p.m., the speaker concluded that the crowd had consumed enough beer to hear a radical proposal.

After making it clear that the miners had been mistreated, he had some suggestions. Thurberites could begin by blowing up the superintendent's office, and he then listed the mines that should by dynamited. When he reached the point in the speech in which he told miners what to do with "Old Hunter," it became clear from the mutterings of the listeners that they were ready to follow any leadership.

**The old smokestack in the 1950s.**



McDonald made his move. Worming his way through the crowd, he approached the speaker's log. When the agitator paused in his talk, McDonald stepped beside him.

"Men," McDonald began calmly, "this radical that has been talking to you is an enemy to you and to the country. He's trying to get you to commit murder, and to get you sent to the penitentiary—or hung. You can quit work, but you can't kill people and destroy property—not in this state. These walking delegates and leaders that are telling you to do these things are just a sorry lot of damned scoundrels, and I'm going to put them where they belong, and where they're *trying* to put you.

"I'm captain of Company B, Ranger Service, and I'm here alone, but I'll have my men here if I need them, and I'll hang just such fellows as this man. . . ."

McDonald turned to point his finger, but the agitator had slipped into the darkness.

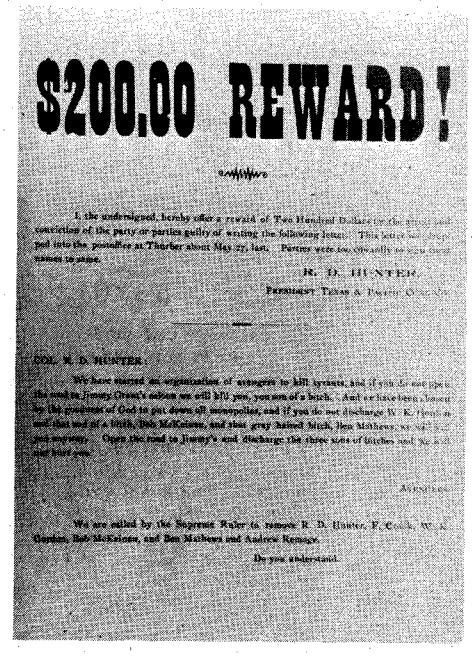
"Captain, Captain," a voice rang from the audience, and its owner urged the Ranger to leave, pointing out that the men were desperate and that his life would be in danger if he remained.

"Don't mind me," McDonald said. "That's been tried on me more than once without much success. You see, I'm here yet. I'm spared, I reckon, to give you some good advice. Now, you men had better take it and give up these meetings, and if you've got to jump onto somebody, jump onto the fellows that's trying to get you into trouble."

McDonald, his voice still calm, looked over the crowd. "Good night."

THE following morning a delegation waited outside the hotel until McDonald, holding his Winchester, walked to the verandah. Several of the miners asked what kind of protection they would receive if they returned to work, and McDonald assured them that they would receive full protection and that they would receive fair treatment. Once again, a lull blanketed Thurber.

Much of the personality of the town



$200.00 REWARD!

I, the undersigned, hereby offer a reward of Two Hundred Dollars for the arrest and conviction of the party or parties guilty of writing the following letter. This letter was dropped into the postoffice at Thurber about May 27, last. Parties were too cowardly to sign their names to same.

R. D. HUNTER,
President Texas & Pacific Coal Co.

COL. R. D. HUNTER:

We have started an organization of avengers to kill tyrants, and if you do not open the road to Jimmy Grant's saloon we will kill you, you son of a bitch. And we have been chosen by the goodness of God to put down all monopolies, and if you do not discharge W. K. Gordon and that son of a bitch, Bob McKeinan, and that gray haired bitch, Ben Mathews, we will kill you anyway. Open the road to Jimmy's and discharge the three sons of bitches and we will not hurt you.

Avengers.

We are called by the Supreme Ruler to remove R. D. Hunter, F. Cook, W. K. Gordon, Bob McKeinan, and Ben Mathews and Andrew Remage.

Do you understand.

**The reward poster issued by R. D. Hunter, President of the Texas & Pacific Coal Company, for the arrest and conviction of the parties responsible for a letter threatening his life.**

was due to the personality of the coal company president, Colonel Hunter, who determined that the community be self-sufficient. He ordered the 900 acres encompassing the town enclosed with a barbed wire fence. Some believed that the order came because the Colonel wanted to keep out miners who had worked for the Johnson brothers; for even though they did not work for Hunter, these men received their mail at the post office within the fence. Locks were placed on all gates, so these men were required to receive permission to enter the compound. Naturally the "Bull Pen," as it was called, was resented. Eventually the locks were removed, but guards were posted to keep undesirables from entering.

During the first winter the coal company owned the mines, it began building quarters to house business establishments. Soon the company managed two saloons, a printing office, ice plant, livery



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stable, hotel, opera house, bakery, dairy, slaughter house, dry goods store, and a dormitory. An inventory in December 1889, showed stock in hand was valued at $50,000. County officials said the company "rendered the value of more goods in stock for taxation than all the stores in Stephenville [the county seat] combined."

Yet despite the complete stock of goods provided, and the fact that managers were willing to order whatever a customer wanted, dissatisfaction was expressed over the company ownership. One woman recalled that her mother would slip away to Gordon to buy groceries. After a shopping trip, she would hide her purchases under her full skirt and under the lap robe, run her buggy into the barn, and after dark take the things she had bought into her house.

A number of foreigners relied on their children to do the marketing. Many of the miners' wives did not have the vocabulary to shop; some were not accustomed to such freedom for women, and others were too busy tending their large families. It was necessary to stand in line in the stores, so many other women also turned the shopping task over to their offspring. Eventually "order" wagons made their rounds each morning, enabling housewives to give their want-lists to clerks. These items were delivered in the afternoon.

A reporter for the Stephenville *Journal* toured Thurber in the late spring of 1896, and reported: "The miners at Thurber are the happiest, most contented lot of people with whom this writer had ever the pleasure of mingling. They are not interfered with by the company so long as they do the work assigned them and attend to their own business; their wages are good and paid to them in cash every month; the goods they need are furnished them at prices just as low as they can purchase them elsewhere, and in many instances even lower. . . ."

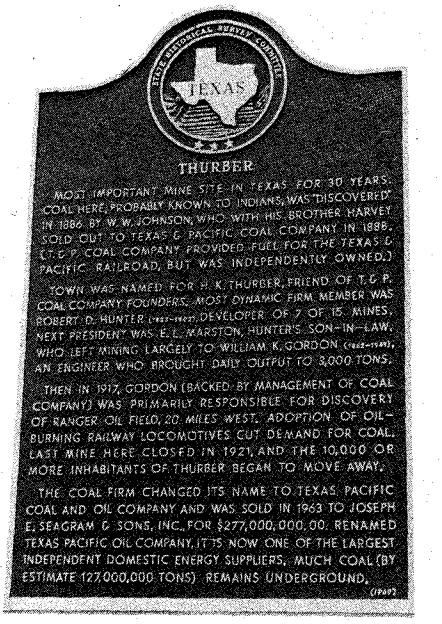
The company operated two saloons; the one in town called the Snake, and the one on Polander Hill named the Lizard. Though the remainder of Erath County was "dry," residents of Thurber could order liquor by the glass, bucket, or keg. The Snake, located in a building 120 x 40 feet, was one of the largest saloons west of the Trinity River. Four bartenders ordinarily tended business, which they considered slack if it did not reach the $1,000 mark daily. In the yard of the saloon were sheds furnished with benches; here the miners, usually in small groups, gathered each evening to down beer. Sometimes a group of twelve would pool money for a keg. Often they brought barbecue, and frequently ended the evening in a song fest—or fist fight.

Next to the saloon was a large warehouse served by the railroad. Kegs rolling from the boxcars to the warehouse into the saloon resulted in a rumbling like distant thunder. One year the company purchased 11,935 barrels of beer from the Fort Worth Brewing Company alone. The 160 carloads of beer amounted to an investment of approximately $82,100.

ALL mines were marked on company records by numbers—#1, #2, #3—then to avoid #13, another series was started, New #1, New #2 etc. Occasionally the mines were named. Mine #9 was Warfield, so named in honor of Mary Warfield Ward, a cousin of the Duchess of Windsor. One of the popular legends about Thurber is that when the Duchess was a child—as Wallis Warfield—she visited Thurber. The late Mrs. Hazel Miller of Stephenville often mentioned playing with the Duchess, but a thesis written by a Southern Methodist University student contains a letter of denial from the Duchess, who claims she never was in Thurber.

Mine #11 was being sunk when Edgar L. Marston, who replaced his father-in-law as president of the coal company, and his small daughter were visiting. Marston introduced Jennie to Ben Matthews, pit boss.

"In your honor," Matthews told the child, "we will name the mine 'Little Sister.' " The child grew up to become the wife of opera singer Lawrence Tibbett.




**Thurber's historical marker.**

The coal vein was in a westerly direction, so the newer mines were west of town. In 1895 it became necessary for the company to purchase seven passenger cars to carry miners to and from work. For this service each miner paid $1 a month, whether he rode the train or not. It was this train that gave the town much of its character and provided grounds for the complaints that would long endure.

At 5:30 a.m. each day, the whistle of the train signaled that the day was beginning. In the homes men began pulling on blue overalls, shirts, and jumpers; women began packing lunch pails, and by 6 a.m. the Black Diamond was ready to puff away from the downtown station. One resident recalls that in the winter, when the miners lit the oil-burning or carbide lamps on their caps before starting out to catch the train, the effect was that of a number of lightning bugs.

Miners who lived below Stump, Polander, and Italian Hills boarded the train at the downtown station; those residing above the hills boarded the Black Diamond at the Lizard, the company-owned saloon on #3 Hill. Cars were left at the last mine until the work day ended, and then were readied for the return trip.

Miners went into the pits by cages or elevators, going sometimes 500 feet below the surface. At the bottom of the shaft they moved into lateral entries, and finally into their assigned rooms, which consisted of thirty-six feet of coal face.

The Thurber mines, which operated on the long-wall plan, were explained by W. K. Gordon, a mining engineer, in this manner: "At the bottom of the shafts, entries like spokes in a wheel were driven inwards and as the coal was mined and sent back over the spokes or entries to the shaft bottom, the spokes or entries were extended to a distance of perhaps one-half mile. Then the shaft would be

*(Continued on page 40)*

**A Labor Day parade in Thurber. The bandstand is to the left of the picture.**

Courtesy Hazel Miller

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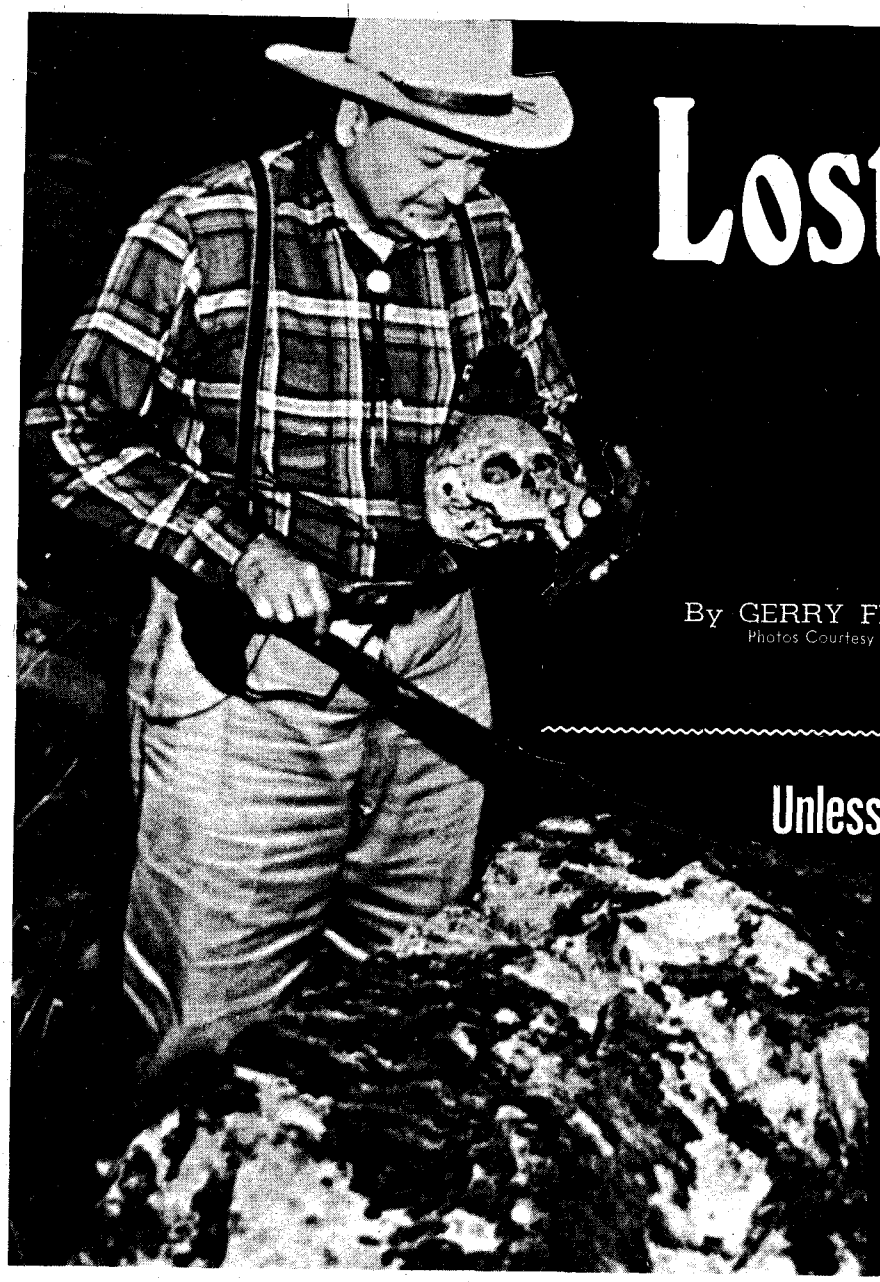
# Lost Gold at Robbers Roost

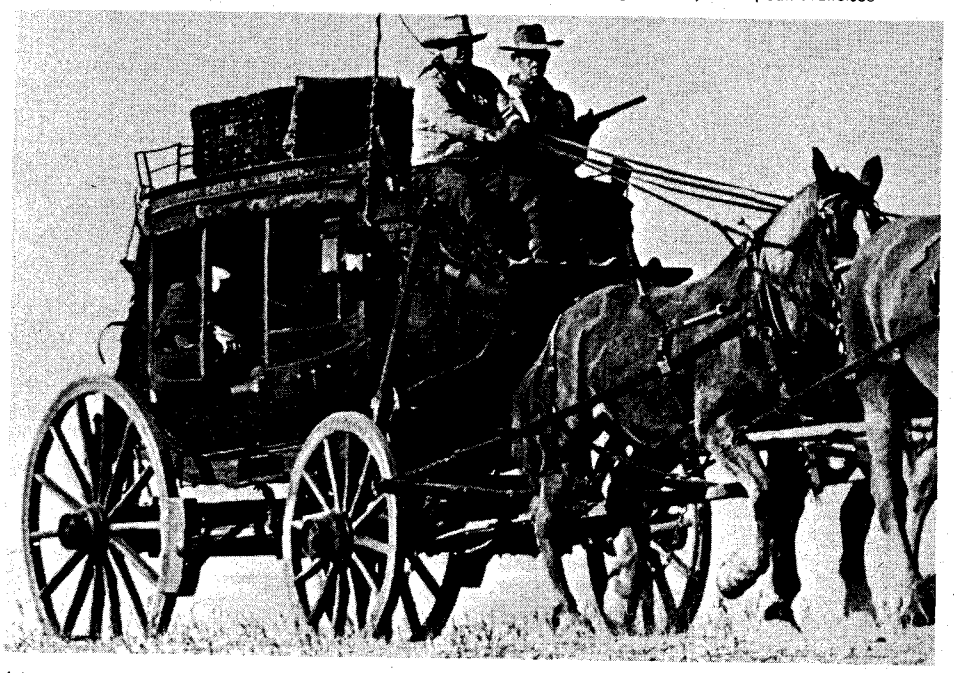
By GERRY FLEMING
Photos Courtesy Author

## Unless you're dead set against "dirty old money," let's go find this batch and clean it up!



At left, Frank Fish examines a startling find. Known nationwide as the "King of the Treasure Hunters," Fish found more than $100,000 worth of buried treasure in his lifetime, but the treasure box at Robbers Roost always eluded him.

Courtesy Wells Fargo History Room, San Francisco



**At left, the lost gold box began its journey by stage from Bodie, California, bound for Los Angeles.**

SOMEWHERE near the southern tip of California's Highway 395, a strongbox lies buried by the rubble of a flash flood. The $25,000 in gold it held has never been recovered. Even the "King of the Treasure Hunters," Frank Fish, spent long, hot days in search of this one but died before he found it. However, he located many relics in the area that would tend to verify the legend. The story behind it all goes like this:

Dust-devils danced down the dusty streets of Bodie one day as anxious passengers boarded the Los Angeles-bound stage. The horses shifted restlessly in their harnesses while the driver checked the rigging.

Finally the strongbox was hoisted into



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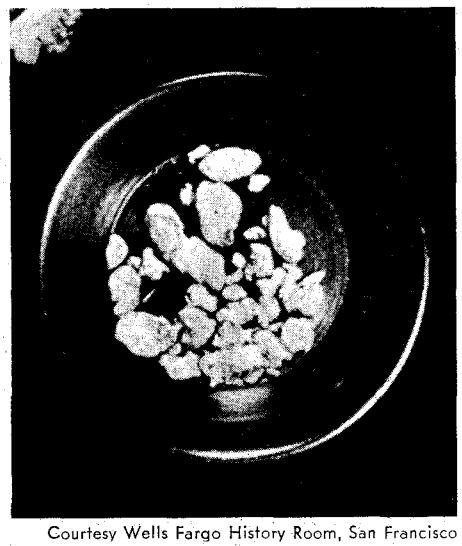

Courtesy Wells Fargo History Room, San Francisco

**Chunks of gold as big as your fist were taken from Bodie's Standard Mine.**

**Above, Frank Fish at one of his many finds. At left, treasure hunter Bill Fleming searches the rocky area for signs.**

place. The sturdy iron chest contained nearly $25,000 in gold from Bodie's rich Standard Mine. There were times when as much as $100,000 would be hauled from the little town at a time. Bodie was one of the richest gold camps in all of California.

As the last harness buckle was checked, the shotgun rider swung aboard and gave the strongbox a solid kick to be sure it was held firm under the seat. Soon the creaking, clattering coach was bumping its way through the chuck-holed streets to the edge of town. From there it would roll through the grassy hills that paralleled Bodie Creek. The six sweating horses would earn their oats.

"Did you strap that box good and tight, Eb?" the driver shouted, glancing at the young man riding beside him.

**Below, the red brick Bodie Hotel seems to lean for support on adjoining buildings.**

"Sure did," came the reply. "The whole rig will have to fall apart before that box'll move."

They were coming out of the hills now. Ahead and to the left lay Mono Lake, its deep blue waters ringed with a pure white layer of alkaline which made the water useless.

The utterly flat land bordering the lake made for faster travel toward the imposing 14,000-foot spires of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Those towering, snow-capped giants rose with such suddenness that they looked like a mural in the sky.

"We'll be in Monoville in a few hours," shouted the driver over the rattling clatter of the stage. "After that it gets worse. We'll rest up some before we go on from there."

Eb shifted his shotgun to a more comfortable position and nodded to show he understood. The monotonous clackity-clack of the giant wheels against dirt and stone rang in Eb's ears until he dozed off momentarily.

It was the slowing of the stage that woke him and for one startled moment he thought that highwaymen were reining them in. With relief, he saw that they were pulling into Monoville and he straightened in his seat as they neared the stage depot.

"Have a nice nap?" the driver joshed with a wink.

Eb gave an embarrassed grin and nodded as he hopped from the slowly moving coach. "You eat and rest while I guard the box," he yelled at the driver.

AFTER a change of horses, the stage with its passengers continued on its rut-filled way. By the end of the second day they were in Freeman Junc-

*(Continued on page 64)*



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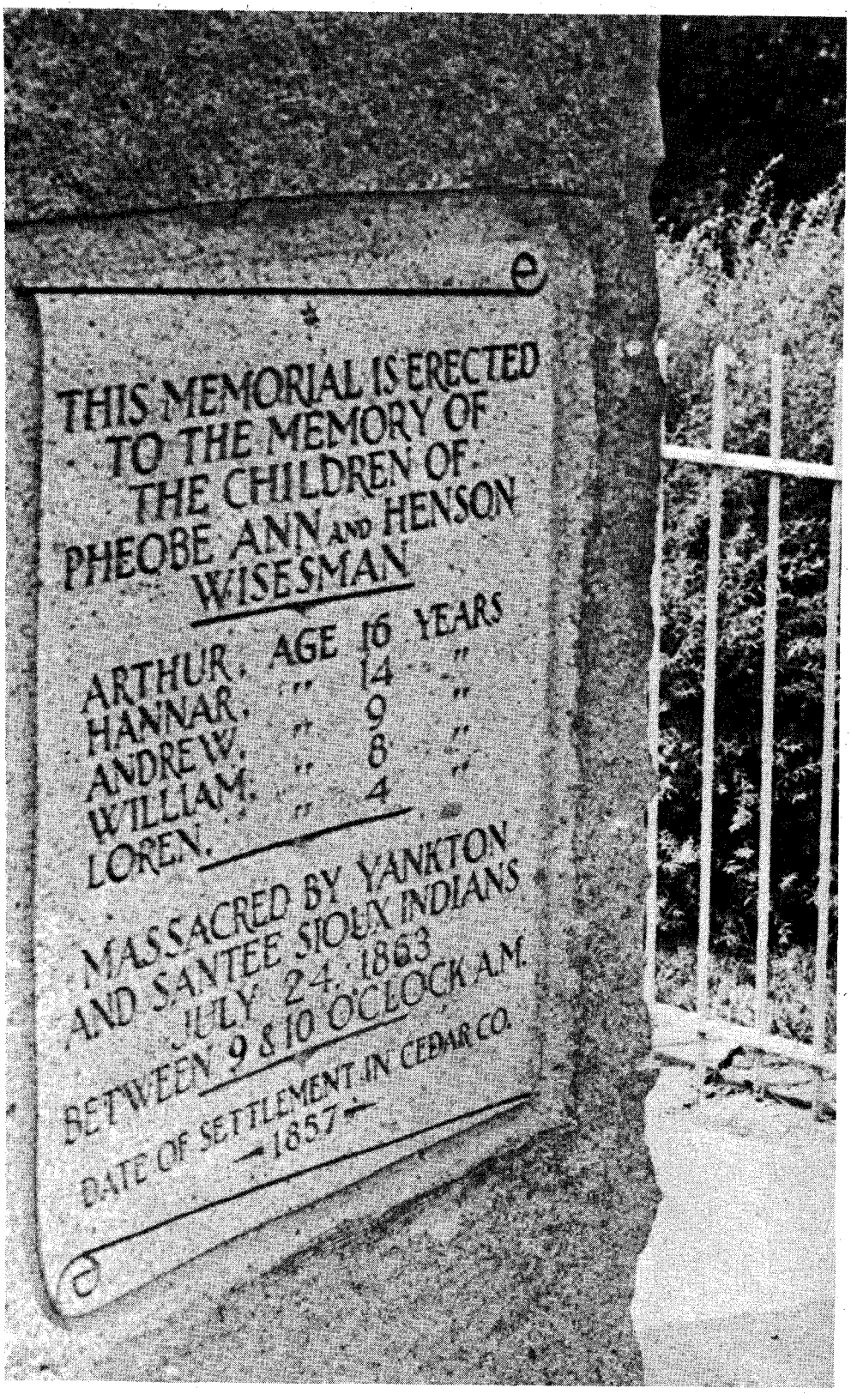
# The Private War of Henson

The Wiseman monument. Note that the family name is misspelled and the date of the massacre is incorrect.




**While fighting to protect others, Wiseman's own family was wiped out. He never forgot the perpetrators, and he never forgave the government for letting it happen**

By SALLY McCLUSKEY

*Photos Courtesy Author*

IN 1863 the United States was embroiled in two wars, the Civil War and the war along the frontier in Indian Territory. Then Henson Wiseman defied the United States military and began his own war, along the woods and cliffs of the Missouri River in the land that bordered Pa Sapa, the Sioux holy grounds.

You can still go there, where Henson Wiseman lived and raged and fought his private war. The house is gone now, and the forest creeps closer around the little clearing every year, as if it would reclaim the scene where so much blood was spilled, where Pheobe Wiseman went mad with guilt and grief, and where Henson Wiseman waged his grim and lonely vendetta.

He and his wife, Pheobe, and their six children lived in a log cabin in Nebraska Territory, near the present town of Wynot. They had settled there when the Territory had been opened, under Squatter Law, for the land had not yet been surveyed. Wiseman built a two-room log cabin in a fertile stretch of land called the Brookie Bottom. He kept bees, and plowed with oxen, and cut wood for steamboats patrolling the Missouri.

At the outbreak of the Civil War his eldest son, John, enlisted. The family must have watched him set off with fear and misgivings in their hearts, yet fate was playing an ironic game with the Wisemans. John, far away in the midst of the conflict would live, unharmed; but the five remaining Wiseman children, aged four to sixteen, who remained at home, would meet bloody and terrible deaths.

All along the frontier the Indians were inflamed by broken or unfair treaties and the influx of whites. In 1862 the Santee Sioux rebelled in Minnesota, decimating the white settlers. Runners were sent to the southern Plains tribes, saying now was the moment to strike, for most of the soldiers had been called back east to fight other white men. War councils were called and along a 2,000-mile frontier, war parties began making forays. The whites, filled with fear at the stories they had heard of massacre in Minnesota, prepared to defend themselves.



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# Wiseman

Henson Wiseman was a fighter and no lover of the red man. Six feet tall, black-haired and dark-eyed, he was disliked by the Indians who lived and hunted near Brookie Bottom. When word went out that a home guard was being formed, Wiseman joined on as scout, enlisting in Company I of the Second Nebraska Cavalry in October 1862. Composed mostly of settlers, Company I was supposedly organized to defend white Nebraskans from the rampages of hostile Indians. Wiseman later said he enlisted because he felt the government "needed all the help it could get" to protect "the lives and property" of the settlers. He took his oath, put on his uniform, and obtained

Photo Courtesy Omaha World Herald

a furlough to go home and say goodbye to his family, for his regiment was ordered to go into Dakota Territory and assist General Alfred Sully against the Sioux.

The Wiseman children were frightened at this news, and the younger ones burst into tears. They clung to their father and begged him not to leave, saying that if he left, the Indians would get them. But Wiseman was firm. Although he had hoped the home guard would stay and protect the Brookie Bottom area, he was sure that another regiment would come to guard the settlers. And with this assurance to his family, Henson Wiseman said goodbye, and rode off to protect the lives and property of Nebraska settlers in more immediate danger.

Pheobe Wiseman took her husband's word that she and the children would be safe, but no other soldiers came to Cedar County, where the Wiseman cabin was, and while Wiseman fought far to the north with the Second Nebraska Cavalry and the Sixth Iowa troops, his five children would be murdered.

IN July 1863, on the 21st, Pheobe Wiseman set off on foot to get supplies in Yankton, South Dakota, some fifteen miles away. The family was running short of provisions, and Indian troubles seemed like a distant dream. She left her eldest son, Arthur, in charge of the homestead.

Arthur was sixteen; he had a gun and his father's truculent spirit. A few months before, he had fought and whipped a Yankton Sioux youth named Chaska. Chaska had told a white man,

(*Continued on page 44*)

**Henson Wiseman in later years, posing outside his cabin with his Colt revolver and shotgun.**



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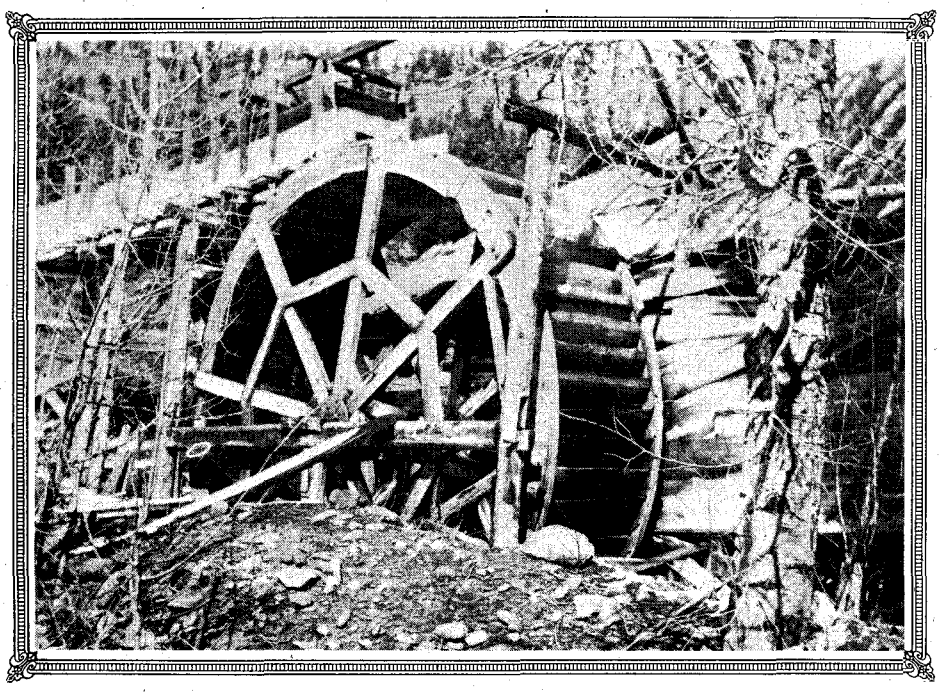

The Barker sawmill waterwheel in 1908.

# LOCALISMS AND

By S. OMAR BARKER
Photos Courtesy Author

I AIN'T ashamed to admit that I grew up in an ain't environment, and that I still ain't plumb sure that *ain't* ain't a good word when you ain't got a better one handy.

Although I was born in a log cabin at Beulah, New Mexico, 'way up yonder on Sapello Creek, my parents had grown up in the mountains of Virginia and North Carolina in a long-gone time when schooling of any sort was mighty hard to come by. Maybe my lingering loyalty to that much used—and much condemned—verbal contraction, *ain't*, somehow ties in with nostalgic memories of Pa and Ma.

I also like to recollect other homely ways with words and expressions that prevailed in the Barker family and among some of our neighbors 'way back before I was even big enough to know how to spell *purt near*. I wonder sometimes if we might not have had there a little pocket of hill-folk talk transplanted all the way from faraway Virginia to a little ranch deep in the Rockies without, however, the traditional Southern accent.

For instance, with my father just

A wedding photo taken at Beulah, New Mexico in 1905. The bride, Mattie Barker, and the groom, John Phillips, are at left, standing. Author is the young man seated on far left.

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starting out toward the fields, my mother might have called to him: "Hold on a minute, Pa. I wish you'd come see this nice mess of souse Sister Allen sent us!"

To this my father might have replied: "That was mighty clever of her. I'll be back dreckly, quick as I chouse Brother Allen's plague-takéd ol' male out of the oats."

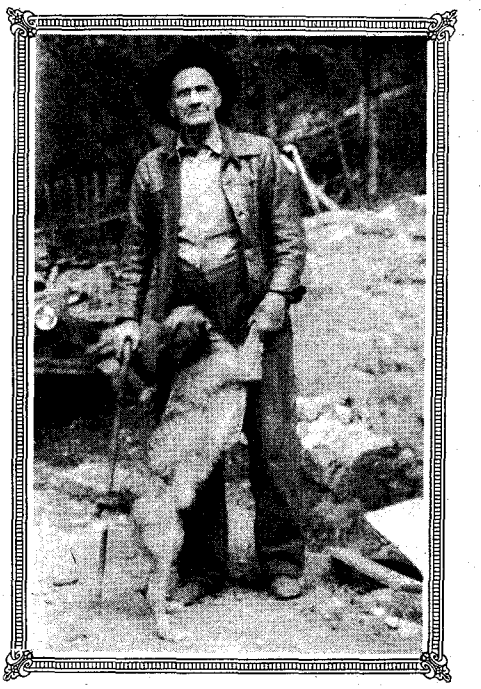
Good dictionary word though it is, it has been a mighty long time since I've heard pork head cheese called souse, a word which we sometimes also used as a verb meaning *swoop*, as in hawk-after-chicken.

Pa's *mighty clever* meant very kind. *Dreckly*, a contraction of directly, didn't mean that. It meant after a while. And *plague-takéd* was about as near as Pa ever came to profanity, though he might sometimes exclaim "Jehoshaphat!" or "Dog-take-it!" *Ol' male* was his euphemism for bull, an animal *liable* to *sull* if he didn't like being choused. One neighbor lady equally sidestepped any too frank designation of animal sex by calling bulls *ol' surlies*. I don't think Pa ever said stallion or stud in mixed company, but he could say "Horse" with a capitalized inflection that left no doubt that he wasn't talking about a gelding. Naturally we kids, then known as young'uns, spoke purt near the same folksy language as our parents—at least before schooling. I don't think we ever yelled or shouted; we hollered. Hogs wallered, dogs follered a trail, beef fat was taller, and with a sore throat you couldn't swaller good. A remote cove or hollow might get called Hoot Owl Holler, and sometimes when Pa got exasperated with somebody's bumbleheadedness, he was liable (not *likely*) to say, "He ought to be bored for a holler horn."

Yet I don't think we ever substituted *er* for *ow* in the name of those lovely little birds which liked to catch bits of feathers we tossed in the air around the barn at nest-building time.

I don't know how we happened to miss out on *et*, but we did *eat* good, mostly plain but appetizing grub. For some newfangled dish Ma and my sisters went

*(Continued on page 60)*

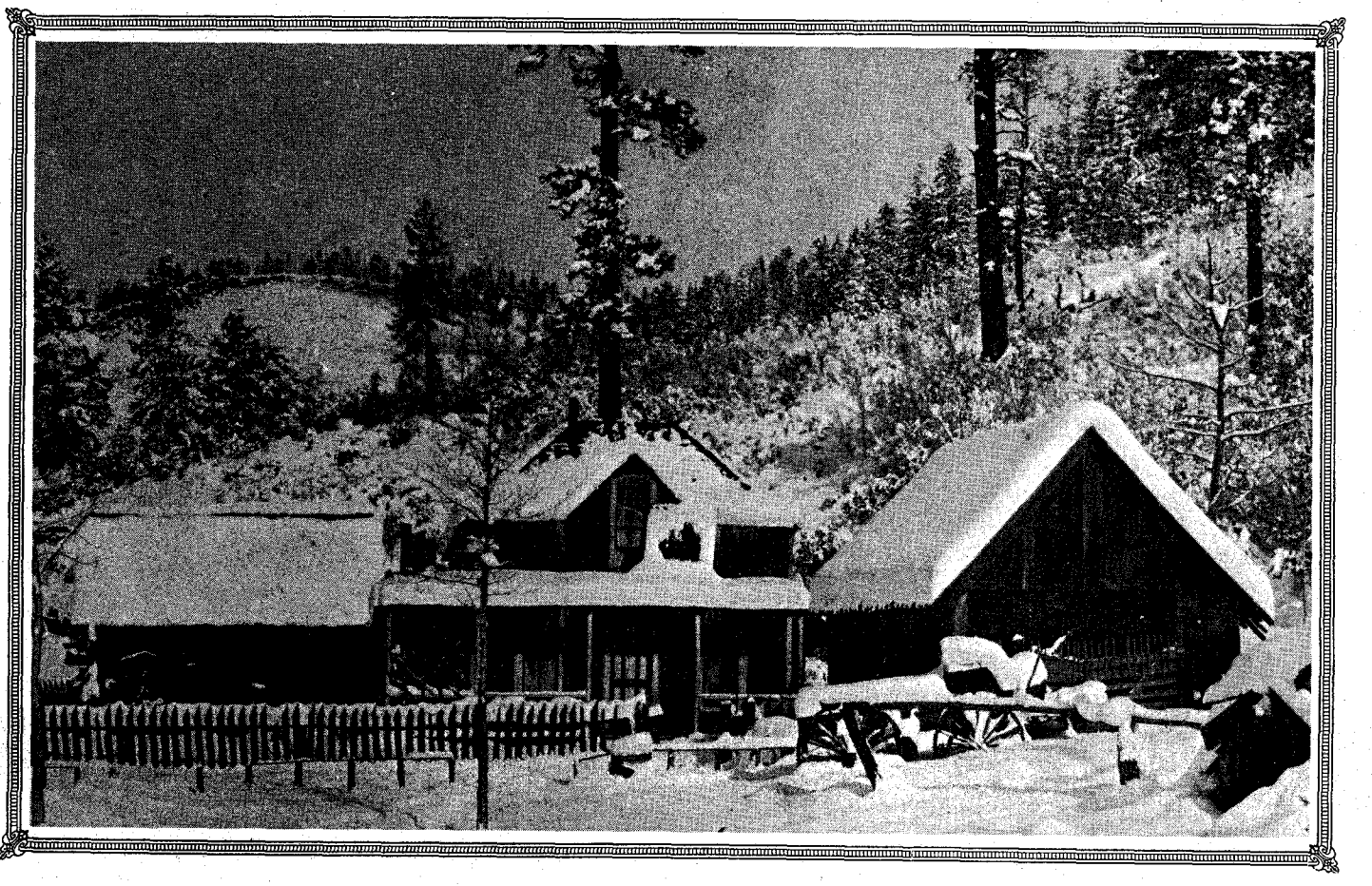


**Squire L. Barker at age 80.**

# FAMILYISMS

## —Hillfolk talk in the Rockies

**The Barker home (also the Beulah post office) about 1907. The small log portion at left is the original Barker cabin.**





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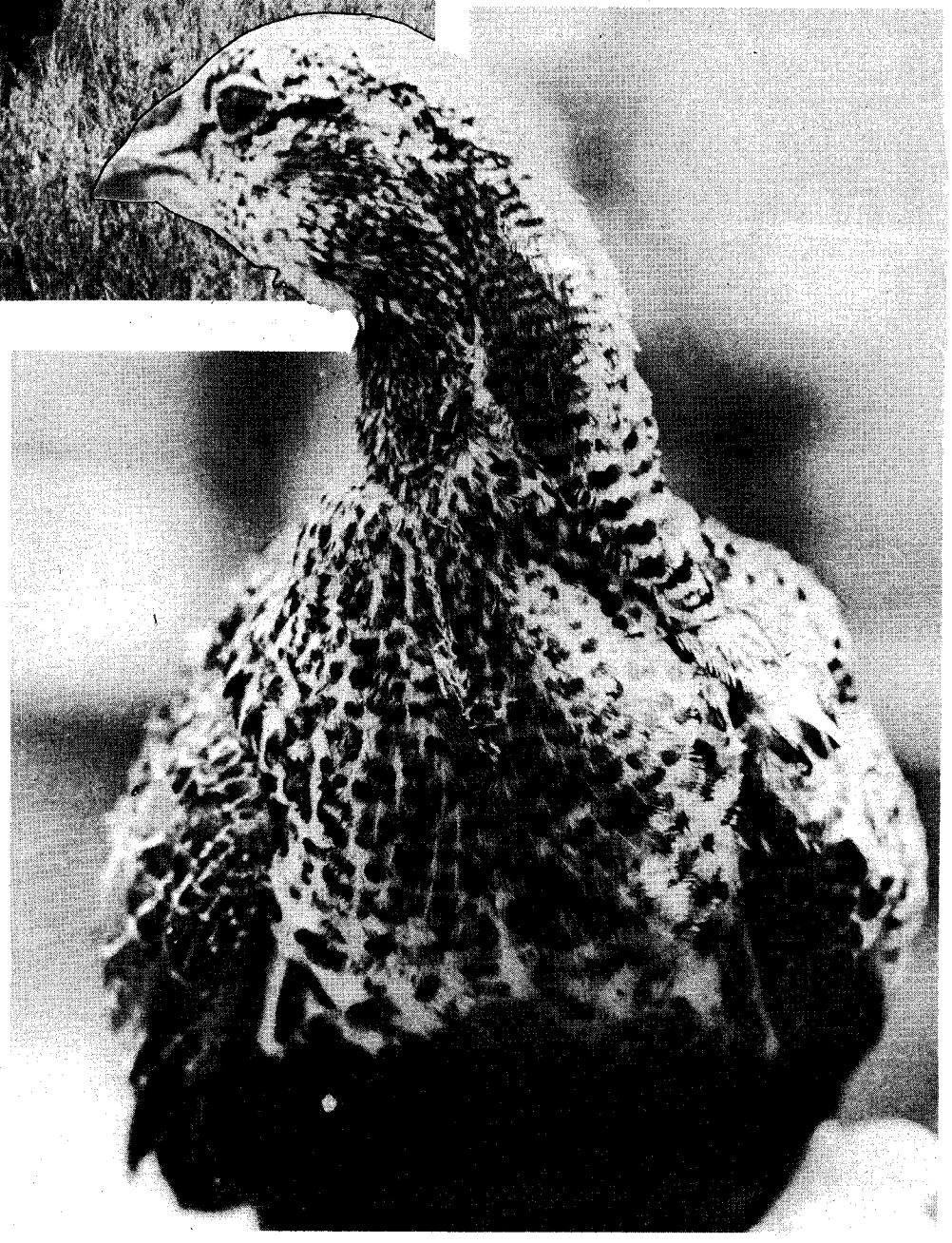
# Wild Old Days!

Courtesy Oregon Game Commission



**A hunter walks the fields of eastern Idaho in hopes of flushing out a few sage grouse. Sagebrush control programs have eliminated the birds over a large percentage of their former range. At right, a closer look at a sage grouse. For the best eating, the younger birds were preferred by the pioneers. The grouse's eggs were also harvested by early settlers before domestic chicken flocks were established.**

## MEAT BIRD OF THE SAGEBRUSH

By Ferris Weddle

THE journals of Captain William Clark contain an entry made in January 1806 about a bird destined to be of major importance to settlers, trappers, miners, and others who would follow the trail-blazing Lewis and Clark Expedition.

The entry reads, in part: "The cock of the plains is found on the plains of the Columbia in great abundance, from the entrance of the southeast fork of the Columbia to that of Clark's river. It is about two-thirds the size of our ordinary turkey. . . ."

After an accurate description of the bird, Clark made a statement with which many later frontiersmen would have disagreed: "The flesh of the cock of the plains is dark, and only tolerable in point of flavor, being not so palatable as that of either the pheasant or grouse. . . ."

The bird Clark was describing was the sage grouse or sage hen, the largest of the North American grouse, and the species that was to become the most vital meat bird along the extensive sagebrush lands of the West. The notes by Clark and Lewis were the first scientific mention of a species heretofore unknown to ornithologists.

The explorers had many firsts in their descriptions of the flora and fauna in the unexplored Northwest, of course. The grouse referred to in the entry was the sharp-tailed grouse, but the so-called "pheasants" were later determined to be two other species: the ruffed; and Franklin's grouse, subspecies of the spruce grouse.

All of these became the frontiersman's "wild chickens," along with other varieties. Where he lived was the deter-



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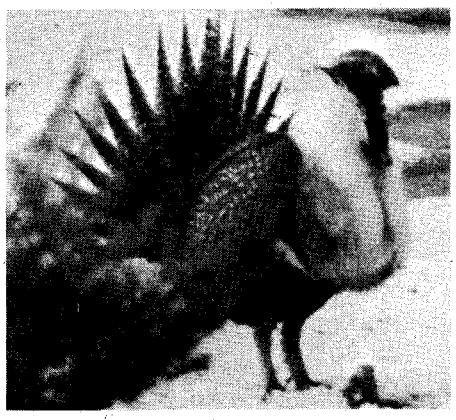
mining factor. In forested areas he depended upon the blue or spruce grouse, Franklin's grouse, and the ruffed grouse. Grassland regions meant sharp-tailed grouse, prairie chickens, and various quail.

In sagebrush country it was the cock of the plains, although in certain sections there might be habitat that appealed to ruffed grouse as well as to quail. Sagebrush meant pronghorn antelope and mule deer, too.

IN the journals, letters, and reports left by the pioneers, references to sage hens are fairly common, including such comments as, "The sage hen flocks darkened the sun."



**Often before winter snows are gone, the male grouse begins the courtship rites, which continue until early spring. The elaborate dancing and "booming" is one of nature's most interesting shows. The females do not take part in these yearly rites.**

Thousands were killed each year for the "next meal" use of settlers, miners, the military, railroad workers, and others. Many were also preserved in various ways by salting, pickling, and smoking. In areas with plenty of snow and sub-zero temperatures, the birds were kept in ice houses.

Sage grouse eggs were gathered in large numbers, too, during the birds' nesting season, although some care was taken to leave sufficient eggs to produce a new crop of meat birds. Professional hunters made heavy inroads on sage grouse, with markets selling the birds for a few cents each.

In the early 1900s, when the grouse population had already declined drastically, a Sage Hen Day celebration was held annually in Craig, Colorado and thousands of young sage grouse were slaughtered to feed the crowds.

Even before Colorado became a state in 1876, the Territorial government had passed laws that attempted to protect all kinds of wildlife, including grouse, quail, and turkeys. Yet as late as 1905, residents could still kill twenty-five sage grouse per day. The limit dropped to three per day in 1923, and in 1937 the season on sage grouse was closed entirely for many years.

The largely uncontrolled slaughter of all kinds of game animals and birds over a period of years had had its inevitable conclusion—many species were almost exterminated, or became so few in number that their survival was in doubt. The cock of the plains, the sage grouse, was no exception. Throughout the extensive sagebrush country of the Northwest, Rocky Mountain West, and parts of the Southwest, the sage hen flocks no longer darkened the skies by the turn of the century.

Overhunting, including extensive market hunting, played a major role in the population decline of the sage grouse, but another factor was perhaps more important. Thousands of square miles of sagebrush country was cleared, or partially cleared, for crops, and for sheep and cattle.

In the early 1940s, game departments in the Western states, with some assistance from federal agencies, started extensive studies with one major aim in mind—to save our largest North American grouse from extinction. In some states, the birds have made a comeback. Hunters now take more than 50,000 sage grouse each year in Idaho and Wyoming, for example. But the seasons are limited and the harvest is strictly controlled. Six other Western states also have sage grouse seasons, varying from year to year in accordance with current conditions.

THE FUTURE of the frontiersman's meat bird is still far from bright, and is completely dependent on preserving an extensive sagebrush habitat. Even on public lands, pressures by stockmen and other agricultural interests continue to grow. To encourage the growth of more desirable grasses and other plants, thousands of acres of sagebrush country are sprayed with herbicides each year despite the protests of game departments, sportsmen, and conservationists. Sagebrush is the lifeline, the lifeblood, of not only sage grouse but antelope and mule deer.

Elaborate and colorfully dramatic, the springtime dancing and "booming" of the sage grouse, that begins before all of winter's snow is gone and continues into early spring, is one of nature's most enthralling shows. Watching the courtship rites, it's easy to understand why the Indians copied some of the birds' intricate movements for use in their own ceremonial dances. One also wonders if the pioneers didn't also copy the birds for some of the movements in the joyous square-dance figures.

In the dim yesterdays in the sagebrush country of the West, a farmer or rancher knew that spring was just around the corner when he could say, "The sage hens are a-booming." The same announcement can be made in a few regions even now, but how long it will be before all of the sagebrush strutting or booming grounds are silent? If that happens, a colorful vestige of the pioneer West will be gone forever.

## HAUNTED EIGHT MILE HOUSE NEVER GAVE UP ITS TREASURE

By Jean M. Moore

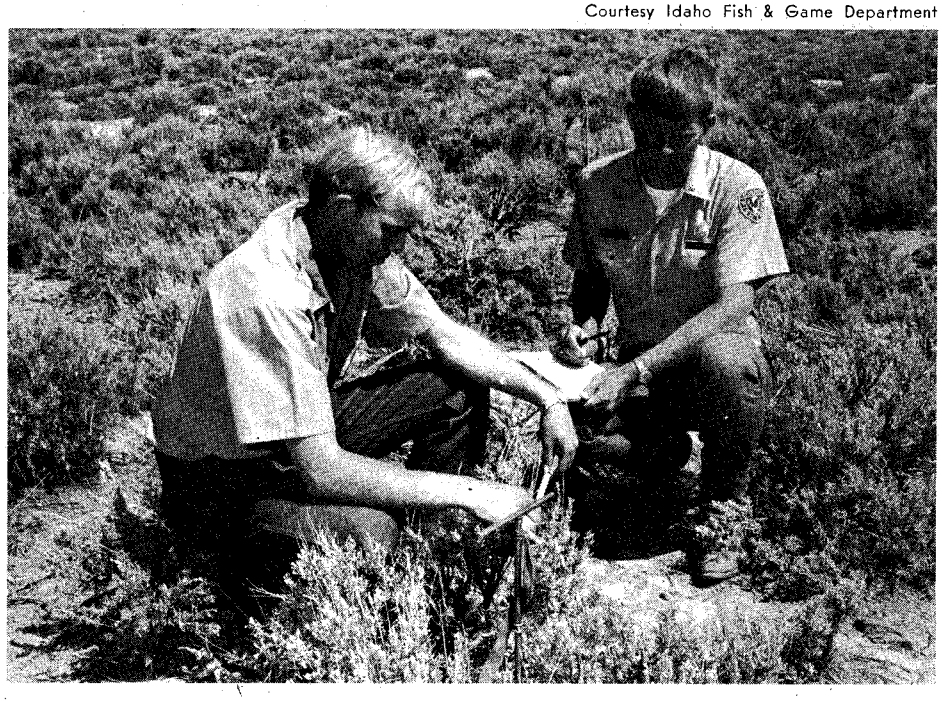
LIKE Robber's Roost in the Ruby Valley, the so-called Eight Mile House out from Nevada City in Madison County was a hangout for road agents and cutthroats of the early gold rush days in Montana Territory.

Eight Mile House, too, reportedly was the location of a hidden treasure, supposedly cached by road agents in the house itself or in the ground near it. And Eight Mile House also was considered "haunted." Several one-night guests

*(Continued on page 49)*

**All of the western states, including Idaho, have made extensive studies of sage grouse, and of the source of most of their diet, sagebrush.**

Courtesy Idaho Fish & Game Department





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# THE FATAL QUART OF STRAWBERRIES

## Bullies hardly ever quit in time . . .

By LAURENCE CONNOR

Photos Courtesy Author

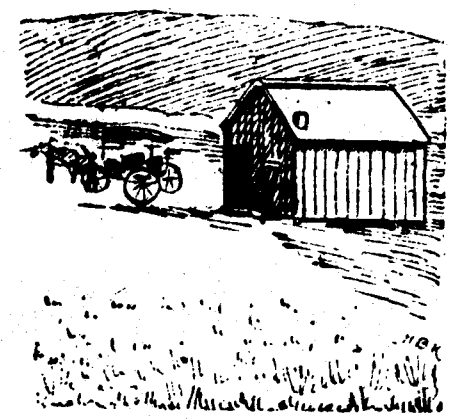
IT WAS midafternoon on the 11th of July, 1895 when Old Man Pace rode his wagon toward Park City up Parley's Canyon above Salt Lake City in Utah Territory. He had a full load of fresh strawberries that he hoped to sell to the miners before night.

Two young men were riding down the road toward him but he didn't recognize them until they were almost upon him. Suddenly they let out a wild whoop and galloped forward. Too late he realized who they were. As they rode by laughing, they leaned over and grabbed a few quarts of berries from his wagon. Old Man Pace was no fool and didn't do anything himself since Patsy Coughlin and Fred George had a bad reputation around the area, but he was mighty fed up with their pranks on him and others in Park City. When he reached town he went straight to Sheriff Harrington to complain.

The Park was a vastly different place in 1895 from the pasture land the sheep of Mr. Parley had grazed on in the early 1850s and '60s. Lush meadows had given way to a small city of 6,500 with several smelters and ore refineries at the edge of town.

The change had begun with the advent of the Civil War. Utah, though neutral, was a slave territory and the government feared that the Mormons might swing over to the South. The Mormons were a bit unhappy with the Union's opposition of theocratic rule and polygamy. Realizing that it had little chance of winning the Mormons' allegiance, the War Department sent California Volunteers under the command of Colonel P. E. Connor to the Territory to serve two purposes. They were there officially to guard the mail and stage routes from the Indians, but their presence was also to make sure that the Mormons stayed neutral.

**At left, Patrick S. Coughlin, a sketch from the *Deseret Evening News* of December 15, 1896. Below, an artist's portrayal of the cabin where the thieves were located.**





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A newspaper sketch of Fred George.

Connor had been one of the leading exponents of mining in California and saw the possibilities of rich stakes in the mountains around Salt Lake City. He urged his men to prospect when they were off duty, and his prophecies of mineral riches in the hills soon proved to be true.

Alta, high in Little Cottonwood Canyon, was the first strike in the Wasatch Mountains above Salt Lake City. Its ores were rich in silver and some gold but soon it was cast in the shadow of the giant. In 1872 some of Connor's men found a vein of high-grade silver in a rock outcropping east of the park in Parley's Canyon. In a flash there were mines on nearly every hill, with exotic names such as Apex, Lady of the Lake, Naildriver, and the fabulous Ontario, the richest silver mine in the world at the time.

Soon non-Mormons swarmed to the Territory, and the typical cycle of boom and bust towns developed. These towns were as wild and woolly as any in the West and the roughest and toughest was Park City. By the middle of the 1880s the town had calmed down a bit and gunfights, brawls and lynchings were becoming less common. In another few years it was positively sedate by former standards but was still the toughest town in the Territory.

IT WAS in this atmosphere that Pat Coughlin was born and raised. It seemed likely he would go bad early, for he was an unprincipled young boy and seemed to enjoy pulling cruel pranks on neighbors' children and animals. By 1885 at age twenty-three he was ranked one of the toughest kids in Park City, having already done time in the state penitentiary for horse stealing.

Fred George was a different sort. He was born in Salt Lake City to a good respectable family and seemed destined to lead a peaceful life on a farm somewhere in the valley. But the lure of a quick fortune brought him to Park City where he prospected for a while and worked in the mines. He soon tired of this and in less sedate surroundings his attitude began to change. After he began to run with Pat Coughlin, three years his elder, the two became local terrors.

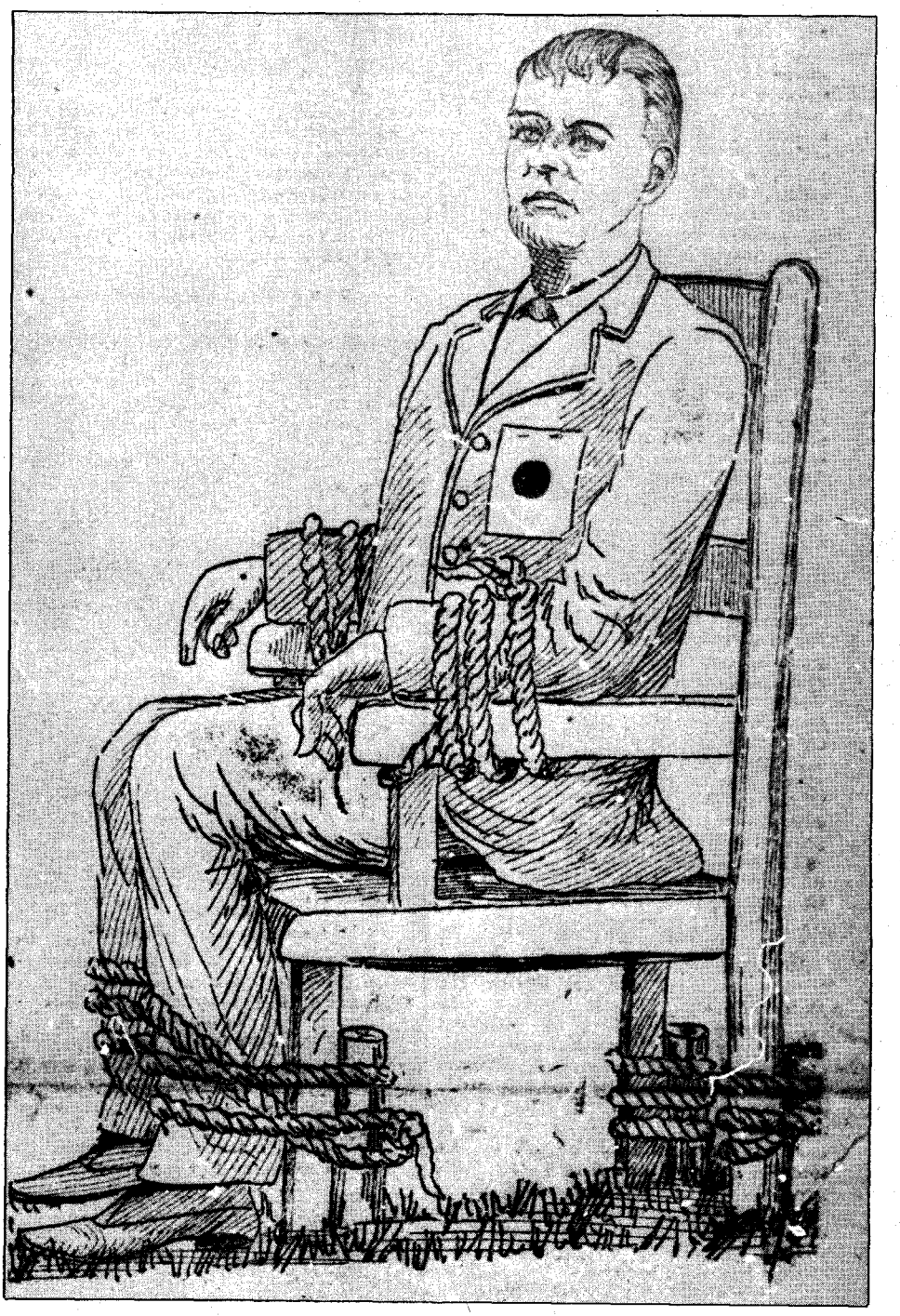
Most of their activities, however annoying, stopped short of breaking the law, though they had ruffled many a feather in the town. This was the situation when Pace came to Sheriff Harrington with his complaint, and the lawman jumped at the chance to get rid of the boys for a while.

Warrants were sworn out for the arrest of one Patrick S. Coughlin and one Frederick George on a charge of petty larceny and the sheriff rode out to serve them.

Harrington missed the boys as he was riding out of town. When Coughlin and George rode into Park City full of bravado and berries, and learned that Harrington intended to arrest them, they laughed and said the sheriff wasn't man enough to do so. They were in a saloon having a drink when word came that the sheriff had returned. Suddenly the boys had a change of heart, leaped upon their horses, and spurred them toward Salt Lake City. There they lay low for a while until the search for them began to slacken.

On the 23rd of July, 1895 they made the acquaintance of another young man, A. D. Bruce. The three agreed to head up into the hills and look for some work as sheepherders or maybe go into Wyoming and do a little mining. Bruce was out of work and eager to go along but didn't have a horse. Coughlin said he knew where to get one cheap, and the

Coughlin strapped in the death chair, as sketched for the *Deseret Evening News*.





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three parted, agreeing to meet on the morning of the 25th to start out.

If Bruce thought Coughlin was going to buy a horse he was mistaken. On July 24 Coughlin and George broke into the stable of John E. Rule and stole a horse and saddle.

The next morning the three set out for Emigration Canyon with Bruce unknowingly atop the stolen horse. Soon a warrant was out for their arrest for grand larceny, and Salt Lake County Sheriff Harvey Hardy sent Deputies Smith and Gibbs on the trail of the outlaws. He also sent word to Sheriff Harrington as to the latest developments.

Harrington and a deputy, Earl Williamson, set out to cut off the thieves in the canyon. It looked like their days of freedom were numbered and they would be captured at any time.

BRUCE discovered who and what the other two were on the morning of July 26. When he learned he was riding a stolen horse, he refused to go any farther with them. They set upon him and took his rifle, ammunition, $12, and the stolen horse to replace the one Coughlin was riding which had the colic.

As the other two rode up the canyon, Bruce started his long hike back to Salt Lake City. Soon he was telling his story to Sheriff Hardy who arrested him but let him go with the admonition to stay in town. Later the charges were dropped completely.

In the meantime Harrington and Williamson overtook the culprits on Crandall Creek in Emigration Canyon on the morning of July 27. Seeing Coughlin raise his rifle, Harrington called out, "Now, Patsy, put away that gun!"

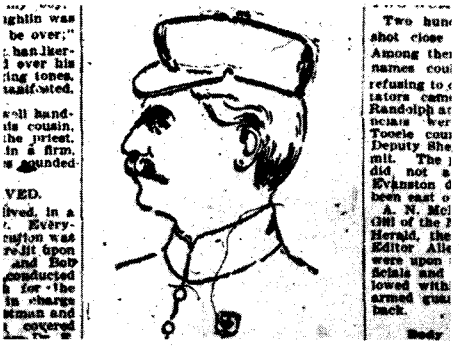
Coughlin's answer was a shot that smashed the sheriff's saddle horn and sent splinters of wood, leather, and lead in all directions. The left side of the sheriff's face was badly cut. He returned the fire as did his deputy but the fight didn't last long. The sheriff's rifle jammed after only one shot and a well-aimed slug sent the deputy's revolver spinning from his hand. The two lawmen beat a hasty retreat.

Coughlin and George rode hard for the Wyoming border stopping only in Wanship to buy 200 rounds of ammunition. They knew that they would have a lot of company soon for one didn't shoot up a sheriff with impunity.

Smith and Gibbs were hot on their trails and wired Hardy from Wasatch on the 29th day that they were about six hours behind the two desperadoes who were near the Wyoming border.

"Stay with them until you get them," was Hardy's reply.

The two rode off in pursuit and headed toward Evanston, Wyoming. Shortly after they left, Sheriff Thomas A. Stagg of Echo, who was in Wasatch at the time, received word that the two outlaws were holed up in a shack on A. E. Palmer's ranch on Clear Creek in Rich County, Utah. It was too late to contact Smith and Gibbs so he wired Deputy City Marshal Taylor of Evanston for aid. Though it was across the border, Taylor responded with Sheriff Calverly, and Special Deputy N. E. Dawes and



Sheriff Calverly

early on the morning of the 30th they surrounded the cabin.

About 5:30 Taylor went for a drink at the nearby spring. A bullet crashed into the water a few inches from his head and the fight was on.

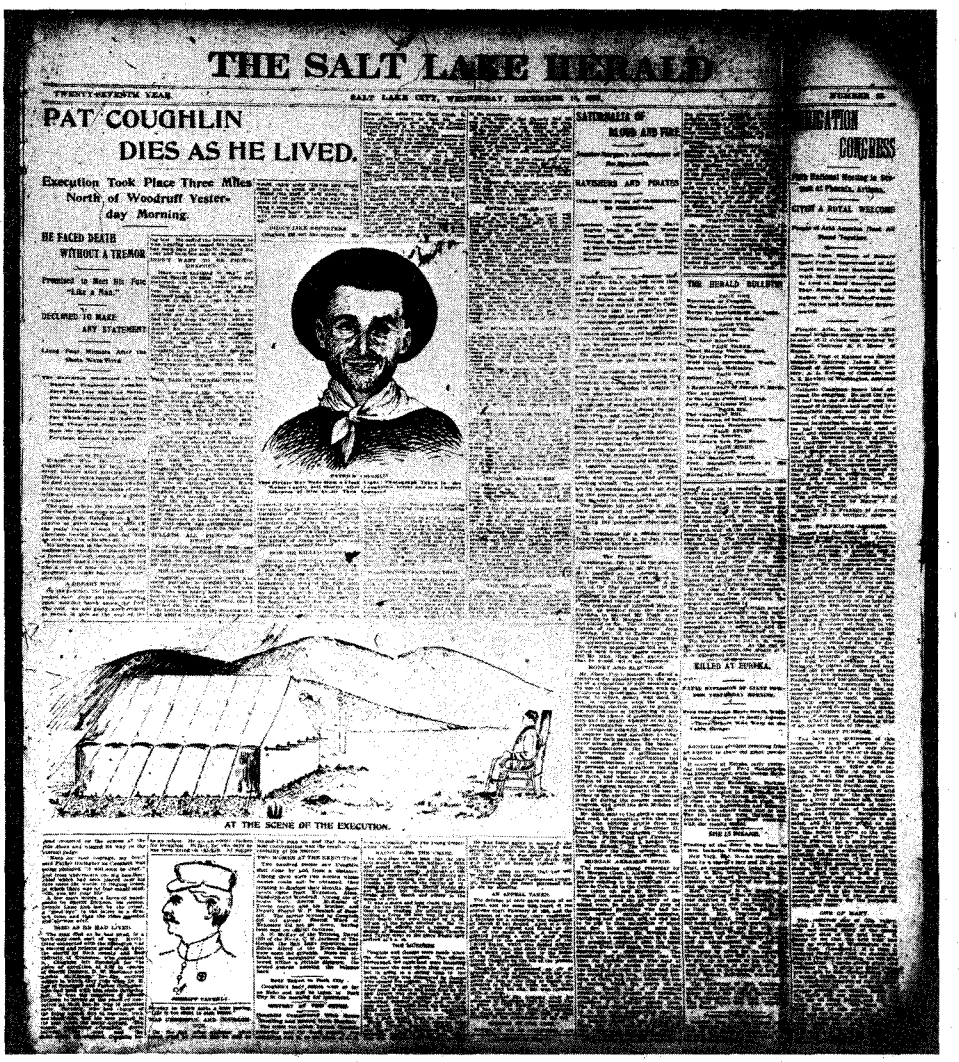
It was over quickly. Dawes, against the marshal's orders, had taken an exposed position in direct line with the window and had only a fence post for cover. A bullet from Coughlin's rifle smashed into his chest and he "jumped like a jackrabbit" and fell back mortally wounded. The boys jumped out the window and ran around the back of the cabin. As they made a break for the rocky hills to the north, Stagg jumped up to get a clear shot at them. Before he could fire, a bullet caught him in the throat and he died in his tracks.

Coughlin and George reached the rocks and exchanged shots with the two remaining lawmen. Taylor took a slug through the shoulder but kept firing with his good arm. When Calverly's nose was smashed by a bullet, the two officers hightailed it to their rigs with only one round left in their guns.

LATER that morning Sheriff Hardy received a telegram informing him of the murders. He started immediately to get a special engine from the Union Pacific to take him and a few of his men to Wasatch to join in the chase. At 2:30 that afternoon Sheriff Hardy and Deputies Irwin, A. H. Steele, Angus Cannon, Jr., and Deputy City Marshal Abe Dyers left Ogden for the scene of the crime.

About that time a large posse of men went to the cabin to recover the bodies of Stagg and Dawes. When they arrived they thought they saw movement in the shack and opened fire. The cabin was riddled with over a hundred rounds be-

**Coughlin's execution made the headlines in many Utah newspapers.**



THE SALT LAKE HERALD

PAT COUGHLIN DIES AS HE LIVED.

Execution Took Place Three Miles North of Woodruff Yesterday Morning.

HE FACED DEATH WITHOUT A TREMOR

DECLINED TO MAKE ANY STATEMENT

AT THE SCENE OF THE EXECUTION.



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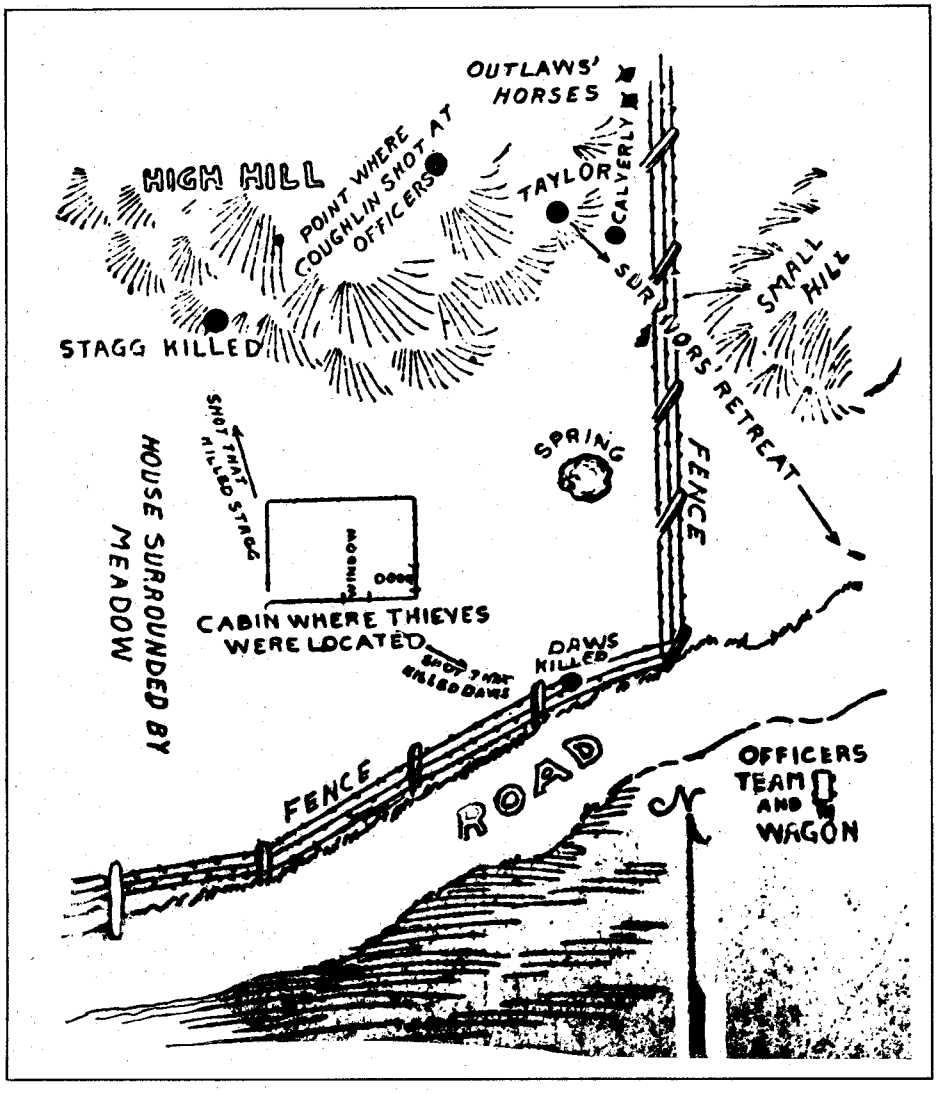



**Above, a diagram of the murder scene showing the positions of those involved, and how the fight progressed. Below, a news artist's sketch of the execution.**

fore some one got up the courage to look in the window and find that they were wasting their lead.

They got the bodies and loaded them on the wagon, noting that only the dead men's guns and ammunition were missing. Many of them had known one or the other well and there were some oaths of revenge sworn on the way back to Wasatch.

Hardy and his men did not arrive in Wasatch until 11:05 that night, so decided to wait until morning to do anything. Rumors had grown thicker and thicker and no one really knew where to look. Armed men scoured the countryside all night but nothing was found.

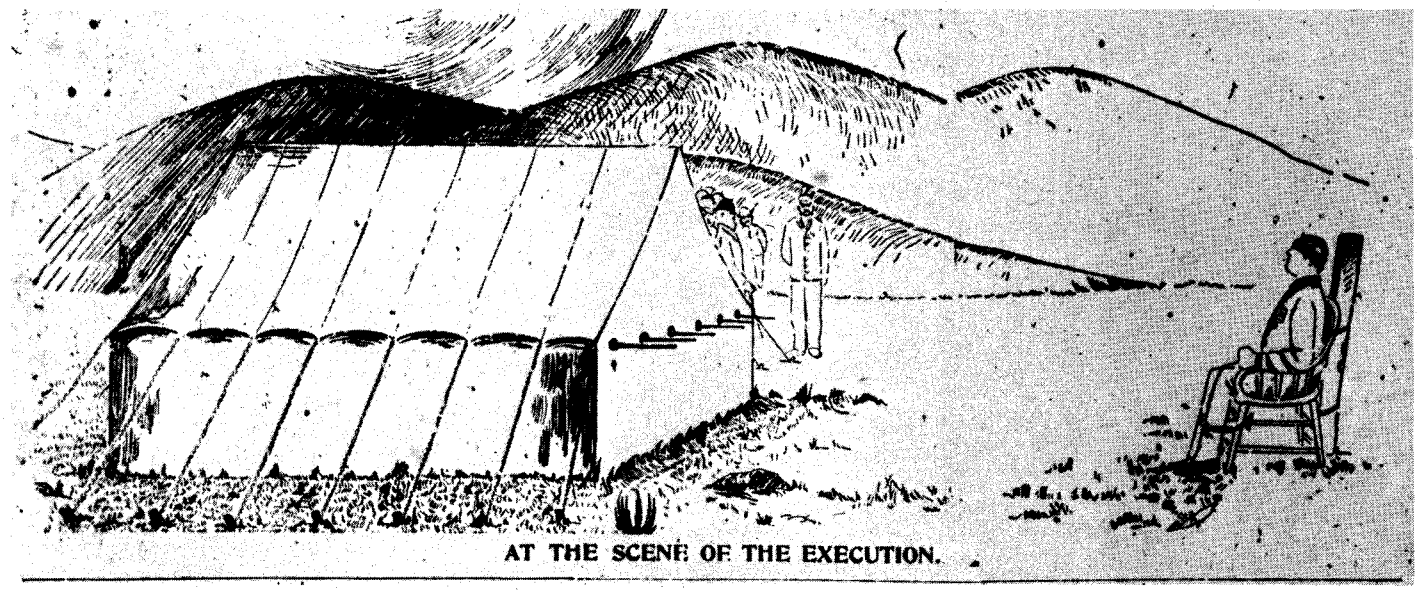
In the confusion Coughlin and George slipped away. While everybody was searching to the east of the area, they were heading down Ogden Canyon toward that city. On the 31st they rode into Ogden with tired and lame horses and went to a blacksmith's shop to have them shod. They drew a crowd, these armed strangers, but no one knew who they were. The boys wanted to know the latest word on the shootings at Wasatch and sent away for a newspaper. By the time it arrived the horses were shod and the two mounted up with the comment that they had to reach Salt Lake that night even if it killed the horses.

The suspicions of the people were aroused and a few hours later a posse rode out to overtake them. They were nowhere to be seen, of course, and the posse returned to Ogden to send word to Salt Lake that some outlaws were coming that way.

A large posse of deputies and city police headed north from Salt Lake to intercept them. Captain Donovan and Officers Janney, Sheets, Raleigh, and Carey rode up the road to Hot Springs in a patrol wagon. Two officers patrolled the north bench on horseback and two more rode up City Creek Canyon. Ten deputies patrolled the countryside around the Hot Springs to the east and west. All were confident that if the murderers came their way they would be in jail or dead by morning.

EARLY on the morning of August 1, Donovan and his men were riding north to check out a rumor that the

*(Continued on page 63)*



AT THE SCENE OF THE EXECUTION.



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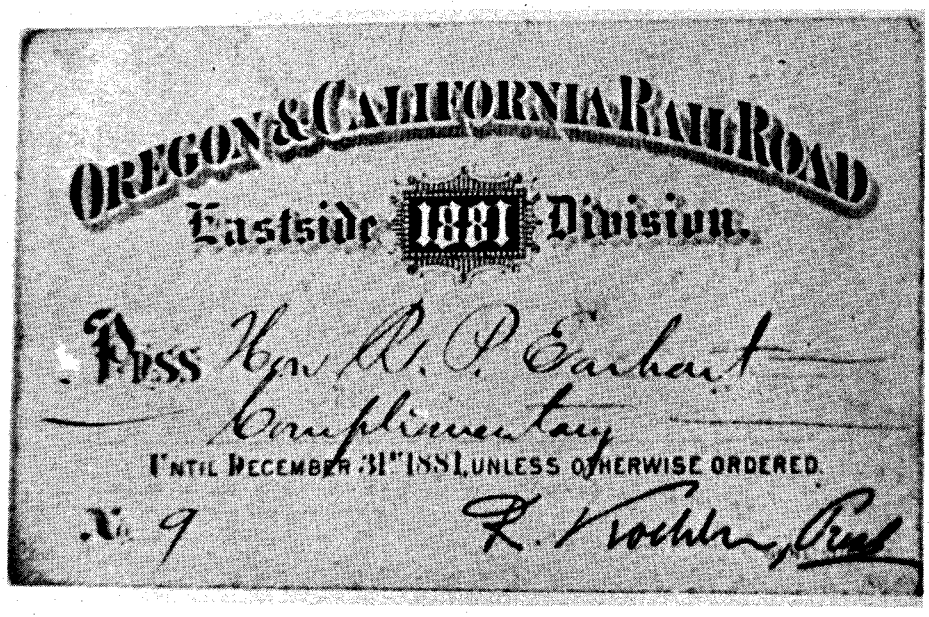
# TICKET SCALPIN' ON

Passenger trains chugging across the West often carried people who had purchased their tickets from a "scalper."

By WILLIAM B. SECREST
Photos Courtesy Author

## It's always interesting to watch sharp rich men and sharp poor men try to out-fox each other

A complimentary railroad pass of the type dealt in by scalpers.




BANKS AND RAILROADS—ah, what villainy was connected with those enterprises in their heyday! In the latter nineteenth century, stories of banks foreclosing mortgages on widows and orphans were common. Interest rates were high and tempers were short; public relations was something as yet undeveloped. Then, as now, bad news traveled with incredible speed and any good news was likely to be overshadowed by the bad.

Railroads were largely unregulated and had things pretty much their own way prior to 1887 and the Interstate Commerce Commission. They could charge what the traffic would bear in rates, and acquired vast tracts of land along the railroad right of way as an inducement from the government to push their rails west.

Immigrants were urged to settle this land, often by misleading circulars and booklets—and, when settled, were then informed of outrageously high prices for the land they had tamed. The Mussel Slough tragedy in California where eight men died, was the result of such heartless policies. It was in this atmosphere that Jesse James and the Daltons operated. People didn't get too upset



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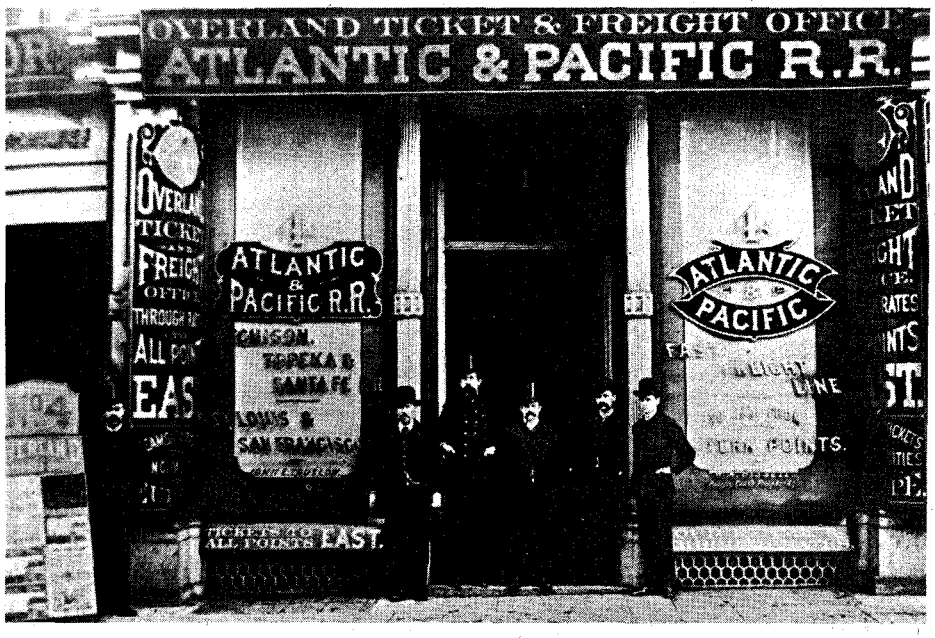
when a bank or railroad was robbed; in fact mostly it was the other way around. Those rascals were just getting some of their own medicine, many thought.

Nevertheless, railroads were perhaps the greatest of the pioneer forces which settled the West. The covered wagon, the steamboat, and the stagecoach all played vital roles in the Western drama, but it was the railroad which had the power to endure. Spreading out its iron tentacles to conquer a wilderness, the railroad has remained down to the present day a principal means of moving people and goods; the others are merely history.

And, if it played unfairly at times, the railroad still gave more than it got in terms of service to a country which was on the move.

As with any giant enterprise, there was soon a sizable number gathering on its sidelines trying to beat the system. As soon as railroad cars became large enough, men were riding the rails or stowing aboard a baggage car for a free lift to their destinations. "It was no trick in those days to beat the railroad," wrote one early pioneer who recalled an experience in Nebraska during the 1870s. "I jumped the train one day and lit out for the West. The conductor passed through the train only once in every division station, and those stations were about two hundred miles apart. My job was to dodge the conductor, then I would be O. K. to the next division station. The conductor always stayed in the caboose at the tail end of the train. I would watch when he started through the train to examine tickets. After he got through two or three cars, and if the train was going up grade [they did not go very fast, eight or ten miles an hour] I would slip off the steps of the platform onto the ground, spring onto the platform of the car that the conductor had just gone through, and I would be all right for that division. If the train was going fast, I would climb on top of the car."




**A railroad ticket office in San Francisco during the 1880s. Scalpers hovered about such places to drum up business and were often able to secure tickets from unscrupulous railroad employes.**

# THE RAILROAD

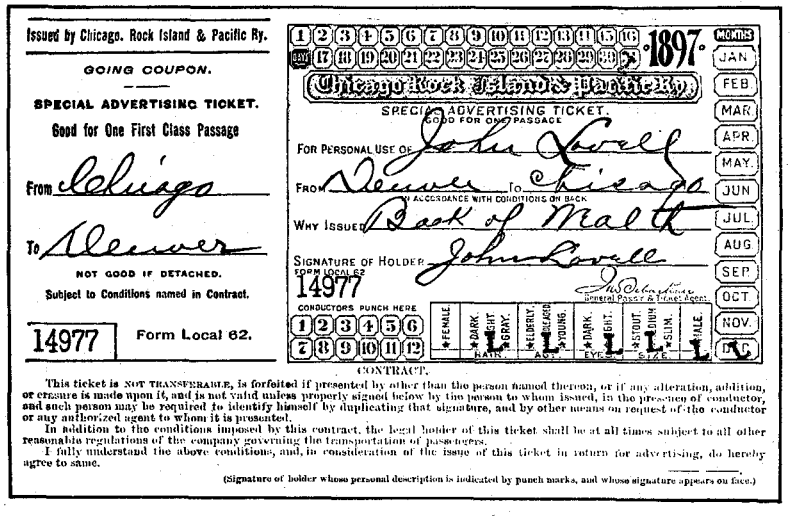
IN THE 1870s and '80s railroads were running large immigrant trains, and in those crowded cars it was easy to elude the conductor. During the spring of 1875 immigrants were arriving at the rate of 300 to 500 a day at Omaha and frequently had to wait while new trains were being made up.

Railroad travel was an exciting business in the nineteenth century and was more like a traveling camping trip than anything else—at least for other than first class passengers. At Omaha, in the summer of 1874, a traveler and his family boarded a Union Pacific train on their way to California. "Getting on aboard a Western-bound emigrant train," wrote W. S. Walker, "with a family of small children, with the accompanying, indispensable camp equippage—blankets, pillows, cooking utensils, provisions, etc., is no small job. There is always a large crowd . . . swearing, hundreds of crying children, a small regiment of pettish women—a host of surly men—innumer-

*(Continued on page 52)*

**Young Joseph Anderson was scalping railroad tickets in Nevada as early as 1875. His account is one of the earliest on record of scalping in the West.**

**Below, a railroad pass that was actually sold to a detective by a scalper as noted in the story. This was a special advertising ticket, the type of pass that could be sold over and over again.**



Issued by Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Ry.

GOING COUPON.

SPECIAL ADVERTISING TICKET.

Good for One First Class Passage

From Chicago

To Denver

NOT GOOD IF DETACHED.

Subject to Conditions named in Contract.

14977 Form Local 62.

1897

Chicago Rock Island & Pacific Ry.

SPECIAL ADVERTISING TICKET.

GOOD FOR ONE PASSAGE

FOR PERSONAL USE OF John Lovell

FROM Denver TO Chicago

IN ACCORDANCE WITH CONDITIONS ON BACK

WHY ISSUED Back of Malth

SIGNATURE OF HOLDER John Lovell

FORM LOCAL 62

14977

General Passer & Ticket Agent

CONDUCTORS PUNCH HERE

CONTRACT.

This ticket is NOT TRANSFERABLE, is forfeited if presented by other than the person named thereon, or if any alteration, addition, or erasure is made upon it, and is not valid unless properly signed below by the person to whom issued, in the presence of conductor, and such person may be required to identify himself by duplicating that signature, and by other means on request of the conductor or any authorized agent to whom it is presented.

In addition to the conditions imposed by this contract, the legal holder of this ticket shall be at all times subject to all other reasonable regulations of the company governing the transportation of passengers.

I fully understand the above conditions, and, in consideration of the issue of this ticket in return for advertising, do hereby agree to same.

(Signature of holder whose personal description is indicated by punch marks, and whose signature appears on face.)



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# GREAT FALLS' FIRST BLACK COWBOY

By ROBERTA C. CHENEY
Photos Courtesy Author

## Growing up on the Circle U Ranch gave Walter Jackson a chance to learn a lot about horses and a lot about white men

"MOST PEOPLE remember Indian Joe only as an outlaw, but he was a good friend to me. I know tough cowboys on the street used to look at me and say to each other, 'Don't bother that kid; Indian Joe will kill anyone who bothers him.'"

Walter Jackson, now eighty-six years old and living a quiet life in Sheridan, Wyoming, recalls his early years as a bronc-riding cowboy in Montana. He was the only black one in the Great Falls area where he was born and grew up.

"Some folks didn't much approve of Joe and said I'd get into trouble if I stuck around him, but he was always good to me. He was a half-breed, and was once Chief of Police on the Flathead Indian Reservation. He was college-educated, too. People said he was the smartest outlaw; he would plan big hold-ups and carry them out. He was a big-time gambler, always wore white or light grey shirts but never had the top button fastened. Instead he tied a blood-red silk handkerchief around his neck and tucked it down inside his shirt. He wore a black hat.

"I was a young fellow just learning to ride. Joe was a real good horseman and taught me a lot. I was young and had a lot of nerve, but he chose horses for me that wasn't too tough so I wouldn't get discouraged."

Walter was probably the first black baby born in what was then Montana Territory. He was born October 2, 1887. His father had come from Texas with a herd of Longhorn steers. Many black cowboys helped bring those Texas cattle into Montana, but few stayed. Walter's father did, and his mother came from Oklahoma a few years later with a Quaker family.

Born on a big cattle ranch, Walter grew up around the corrals and became a kind of mascot for the cowboys at the Quarter Circle U outfit. George Jackson, his father, was killed in a fall from a pole bridge that the ranchmen were building over a deep ravine, a few months before Walter was born. His mother died when he was thirteen, so from then on he was on his own.

"He never called me anything but 'Kid'," Mr. Jackson continued as he talked about Indian Joe. He would say 'Kid, do you think you can ride that horse? He's pretty tough.' I'd tell him I could, so he would ear the horse down and holler, 'Crawl in the middle of him, Kid,' and then turn the horse loose. It was either ride or get throwed, and I soon learned it was better to ride than get throwed."

Theirs was an interesting relationship—the tough half-breed outlaw, protective and gentle with a young black boy in a land dominated by full-blood Indians and white men.

"If Indian Joe wanted any money, he would say, 'Kid, do you have any money?' I'd say 'yes' and give it to him. He always paid me back. The sheriff jumped me a lot of times and said, 'That Indian is going to get you in trouble. He is a bad man. That Indian is liable to get mad at you and kill you one of these

**Walter Jackson, 86, resident of Sheridan, Wyoming, was one of the very few black cowboys in the open range days of Montana. Cowboys who rode "circle" for the big cattle outfits always carried running irons tied to their saddles so they could brand any young calves found in the herd. Here Mr. Jackson shows how a green forked stick was used to hold the iron while it was being heated in a campfire and then applied to a calf.**



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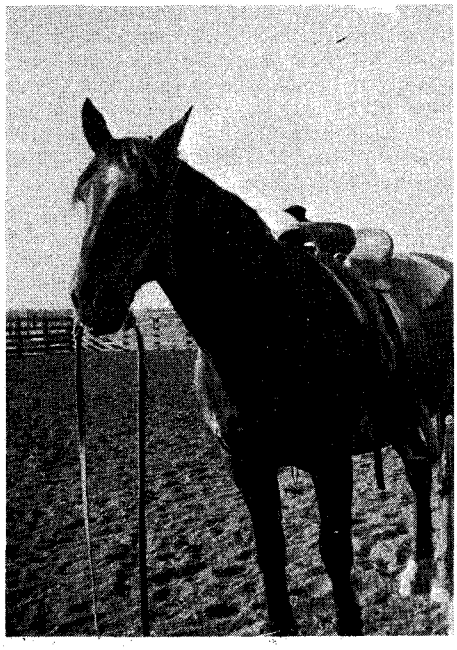


**Walter had a good horse of his own, and for some years went from one outfit to another breaking wild horses for use on the roundups.**

days.' I told him that Joe would never hurt me, and he never did.

"One killing I know Joe did. He got away with it claiming self-defense. It was on the outskirts of a little town in Montana where some people were running a store. Joe came one night when they were counting the money. When he appeared at the door, they grabbed their guns from the counter. Joe killed both of them."

DURING all those early years, Joe never asked Walter to go on a hold-up with him, but years later when the two of them happened to meet in Butte, Joe said, "We're goin' to have some fun tonight, Kid. Want to come along?"

"It was one of the biggest hold-ups in Butte; Dave Charles' place was all lighted up," recalled Walter. "There was all kinds of gambling, and gold was stacked in piles of $2.50, $5, $10, and $20. The next morning the whole town was riled about the hold-up, and the lawmen practically knew that Joe and his gang did it, but they couldn't prove it. If I'd a-gone along with Joe that night, I might be a rich man today."

Walter paused a moment, then said with a touch of sadness, "He made his last haul holding up a train out of Deer Lodge, Montana. He had it well planned but somebody got an inside tip, and the railroad men were layin' for Joe and his gang when they attacked the train. They shot him down as he made a run for his horse."

Walter Jackson knew many types of men, and learned much from watching them. "I had gone to Miles City to break out some horses for the Army," he recalled. "Dan McKay ran the 76 Ranch wagon out of Miles City for years. Quite a cowhand, Dan was, but a little reckless at times. When he had a few drinks, he was sort of overbearing. One time he met a gunslinger in one of the Miles City bars, and I guess Dan stroked that Texan's hair the wrong way. They kept drinkin' and arguin' until they both reached for their guns. The Texan won the draw and shot Dan down.

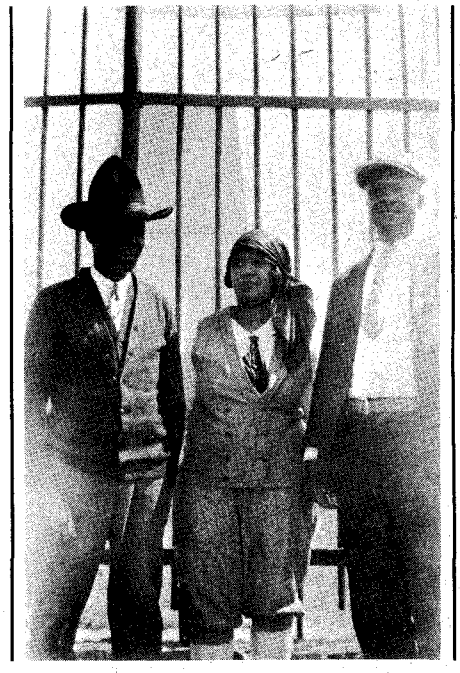
"I had never seen that Texan before and didn't see him again until three or four years later when I met up with him in a cow camp. He was cookin' for the outfit, and I didn't recognize him at first. The second day I was there, I had my round-up bed rolled and was sitting on it. I had my six-gun strapped across my bed.

"There was a big hay meadow just off from the camp; the cook pointed to it and said to me, 'Go down there an' kill some of those sage grouse and I'll cook them for supper. I still wasn't sure he was the same man that had killed Dan, but I picked up my gun and strapped it on. 'What are you goin' to do with that thing?' he asked as he looked at my .32-20. 'I'm going to kill some of those grouse like you said.'

"So I saddled up and rode down to the meadow. When I came back, I had seven grouse and six cottontail rabbits. He looked sort of surprised and said, 'Well, by damn, you're good with that thing. I'm supposed to be a gunman, but I don't think I could do that good.'

"Then he said, 'Tomorrow let's you and me go out and have target practice and see which one is the best with a six-gun.'

"It was then I found out who he was,



**Walter and his wife, Helen, and a friend.**

and I took the advice of the boys in camp who said, 'Don't go out with that guy. He's a killer—the one that shot Dan McKay. Claims he killed several men in Texas, and if you beat him at shooting he's just liable to get mad and shoot you, too, and pretend it was an accident.' I figured my friends had a point there, and maybe that's why I'm still alive today."

GROWING UP on the Circle U Ranch gave Walter a chance to learn a lot about horses, and he knew that most of all he wanted to work with them. He learned to corral the wild ones and break them to ride. Rounding up cattle from the vast grazing areas required a lot of saddle horses, and it became Walter's job on the Circle U to get horses ready for the cowboys to use.

Horses for freight teams were also in great demand, as all supplies had to be brought by wagon from the river boat-dock at Fort Benton or from distant railway points to the mining camps and

*(Continued on page 51)*

**Walter Jackson loading the bed-roll wagon for the Flying Circle Ranch near Gillette, Wyoming.**

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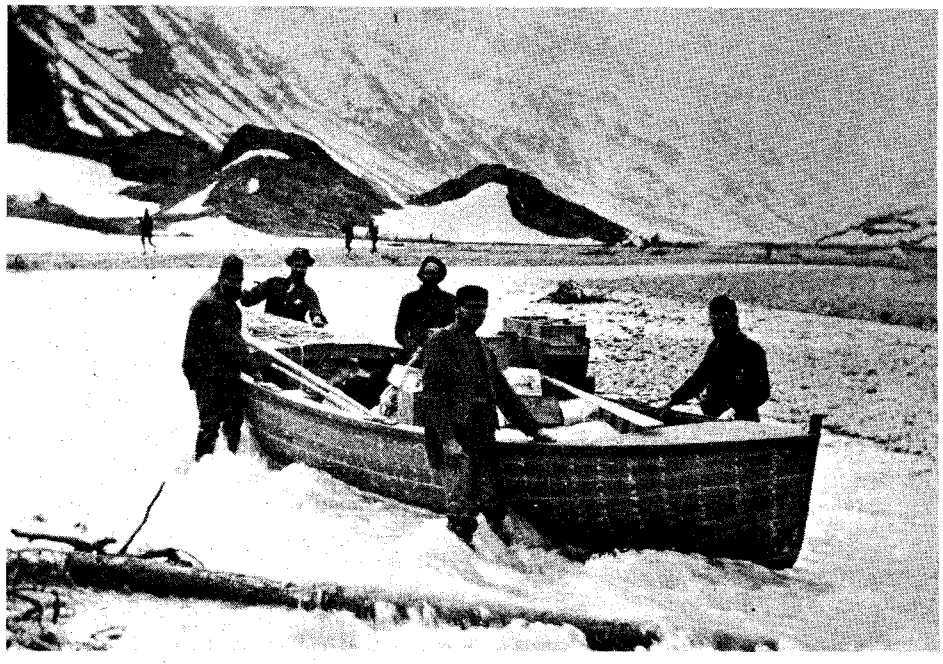


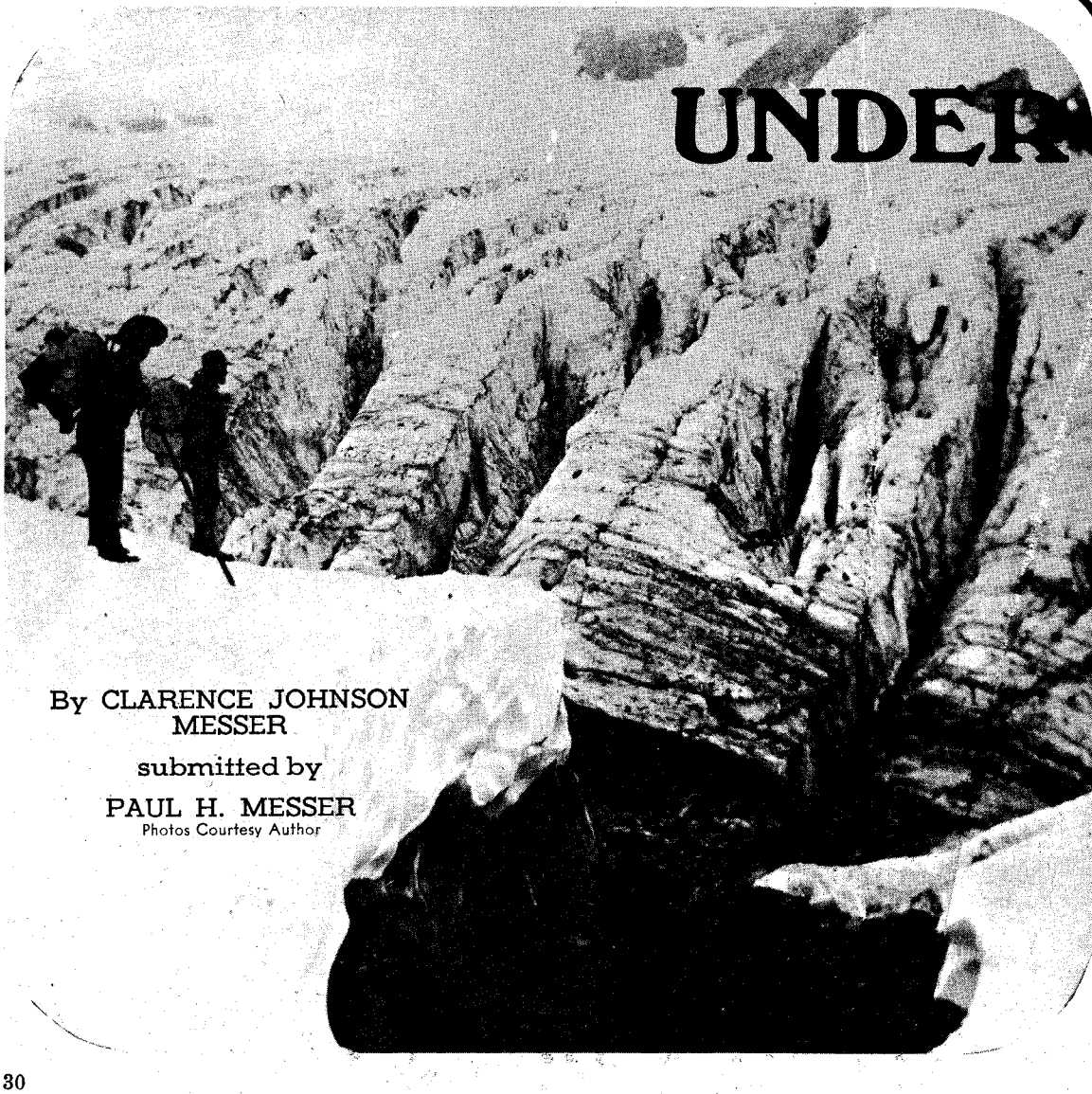
Above, a Chicago yawl, a type of small boat used in Alaskan waters. Below, two members of the party look out across a vast sea of crevasses.

**Explanatory Note: In 1903 my father lectured throughout Massachusetts about a trip he had made in 1898 for the Boston *Transcript*. His lecture, which ran about 11,000 words, was accompanied by a hundred slides he had made. The following account has been condensed from his original script.—Paul H. Messer**

THE Boston *Transcript* of April 10, 1902 carried an article concerning a mail carrier who had the most dangerous route in the world. This route started at Valdes and wound into the interior of Alaska.

Four years before this mail carrier received his commission, one thousand people attempted to enter the Copper River country, or Alaskan interior—in their effort opening as a thoroughfare the most formidable glacier ever scaled by man, and holding it open for 200 days.

It is my purpose to tell you about this original trail and only in reproduction may it be told, for it is now closed forever [1903]. Although the glacier is sealed, and a million dollars of gov-



# UNDER THE

By CLARENCE JOHNSON MESSER

submitted by

PAUL H. MESSER

Photos Courtesy Author

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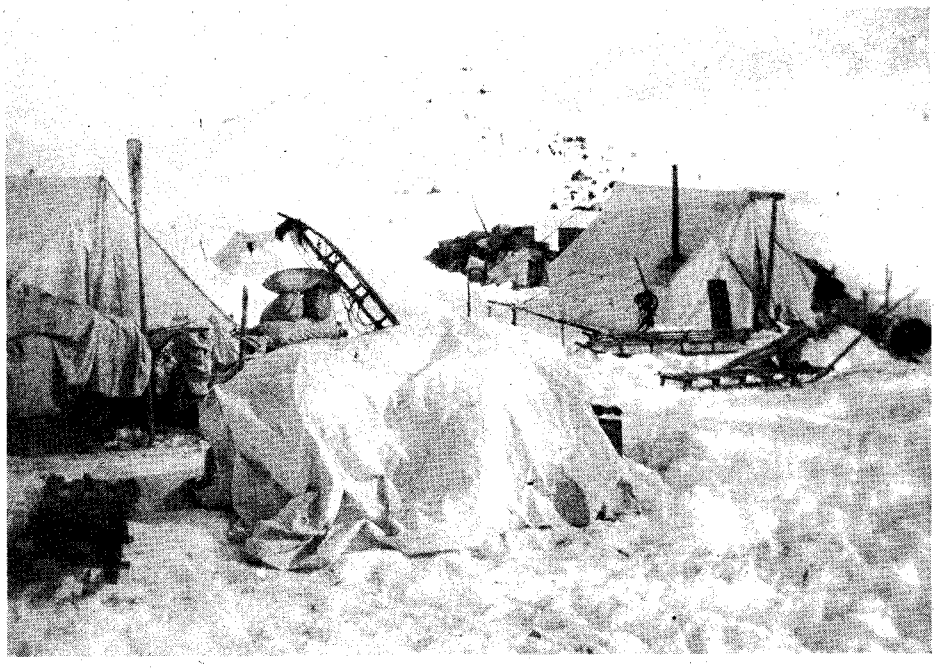
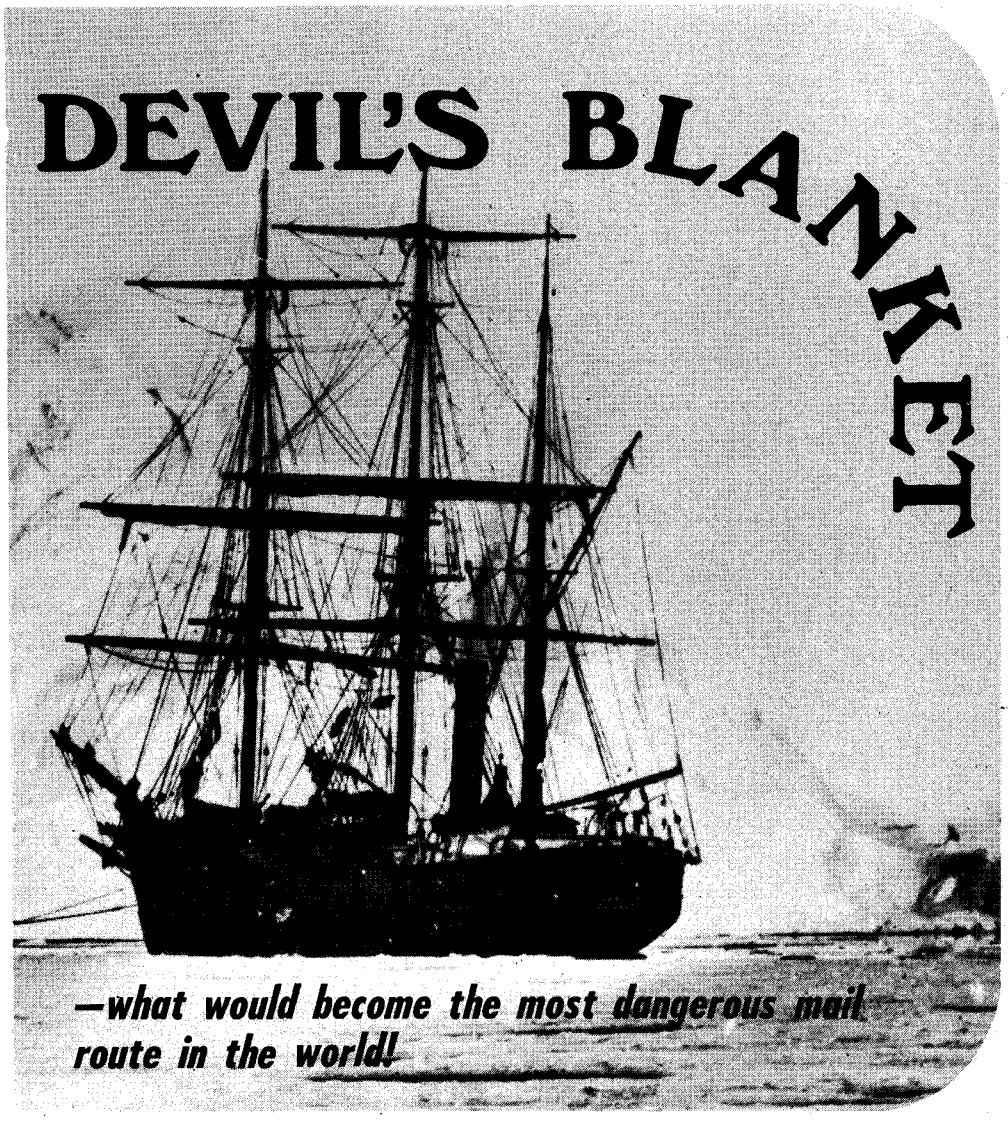
ernment money has gone into the obliteration of primary hazards, the mailman still covers the most dangerous route in the world.

We sailed from Seattle on a dismal day in 1898. There was cause for timidity in those first voyages to the Valdes country. Two years before, the Klondike had been exploited but this new destination was fully a thousand miles farther north and over waters known to but few captains of sailing vessels. A pilot charged $100 a day for his services and would stay with a ship only three out of an eight-days voyage.

The coast was terrifically rockbound and what charts existed were totally unreliable. Two weeks before our sailing the steamship *Corona* met with disaster on an unknown reef, and on the last trip up of our sister ship, the *Valentia*, the deck load of live cattle had to be thrown overboard to prevent the vessel's foundering. Almost every State in the Union was represented in our quota of 170 passengers, who for the privilege of reaching the land of gold were paying



**Above, tents at the foot of the glacier. Below, one of the ships used to bring in the goods. It is not known if this is the *Sitka* or the *Cape Edgecomb*.**




ten dollars a day and receiving the worst possible kind of steerage fare.

About a week later we had forged our way up past Cape Mazon, past Sitka and Cape Edgecomb. We occasionally sighted the icebound coast but for the most part we kept well at sea. Surely Pacific is a misnomer for that depth and breadth of water which in anger can distort its ebb and flow so awfully. This terrible storm followed us continually.

Some hours later, when we were snugly protected from the fury of the tempest by the towering rocks of McCloud's Bay, the captain told me that neither his knowledge of navigation, his chart nor compass had anything to do with the betterment of our condition. He had sounded his whistle until his approach to the shore had given an echo, then steering directly for the sound had found this bay which he had entered, knowing the precipitous character of the mountain coast formation.

All night we lay tethered in the little bay, tethered to the shore, for with twenty fathoms of cable no anchorage could be found.

IN THE morning we again put out to sea under a cloud commotion and on a heavy swell, but the storm had ceased. At noon the sun appeared and we again approached the coast, and entered a strait which continually narrowed for three hours slow sailing, then we passed through a cut hardly wide enough to allow two vessels abreast, and we were in Valdes Bay.

It was an egg-shaped basin we had entered, and as we slowly sailed down the gradually spreading width, high in the heavens reared the tops of bordering mountains, a sublime spectacle of natural grandeur.

The customs of transportation companies in the Far North were new to us. No sooner had the ship been fast-



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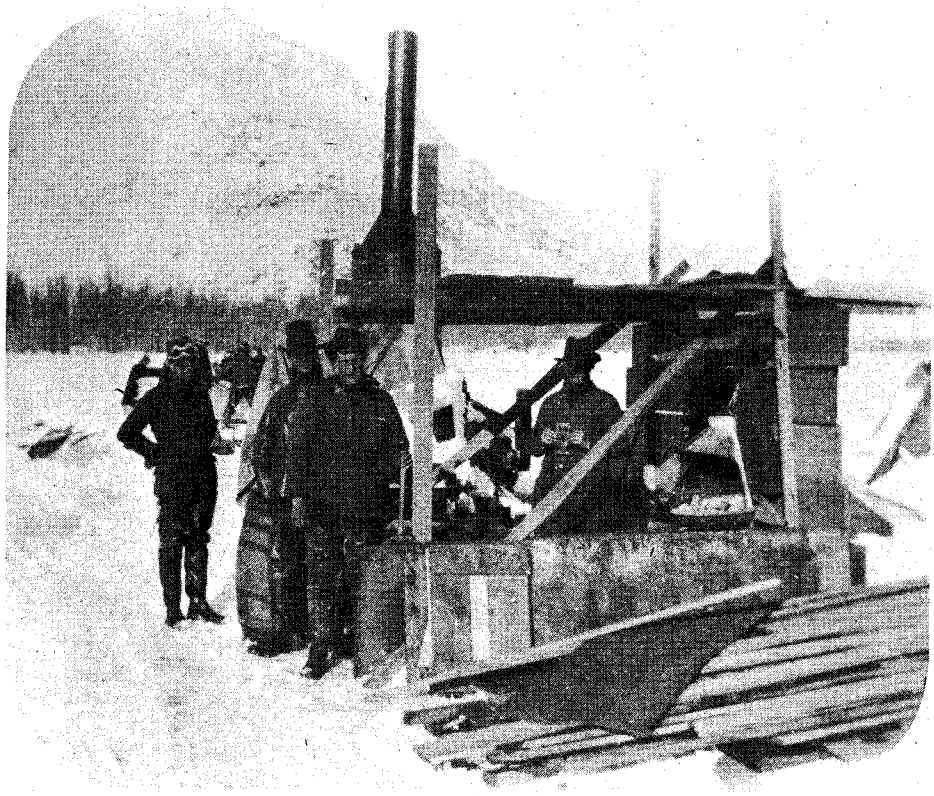


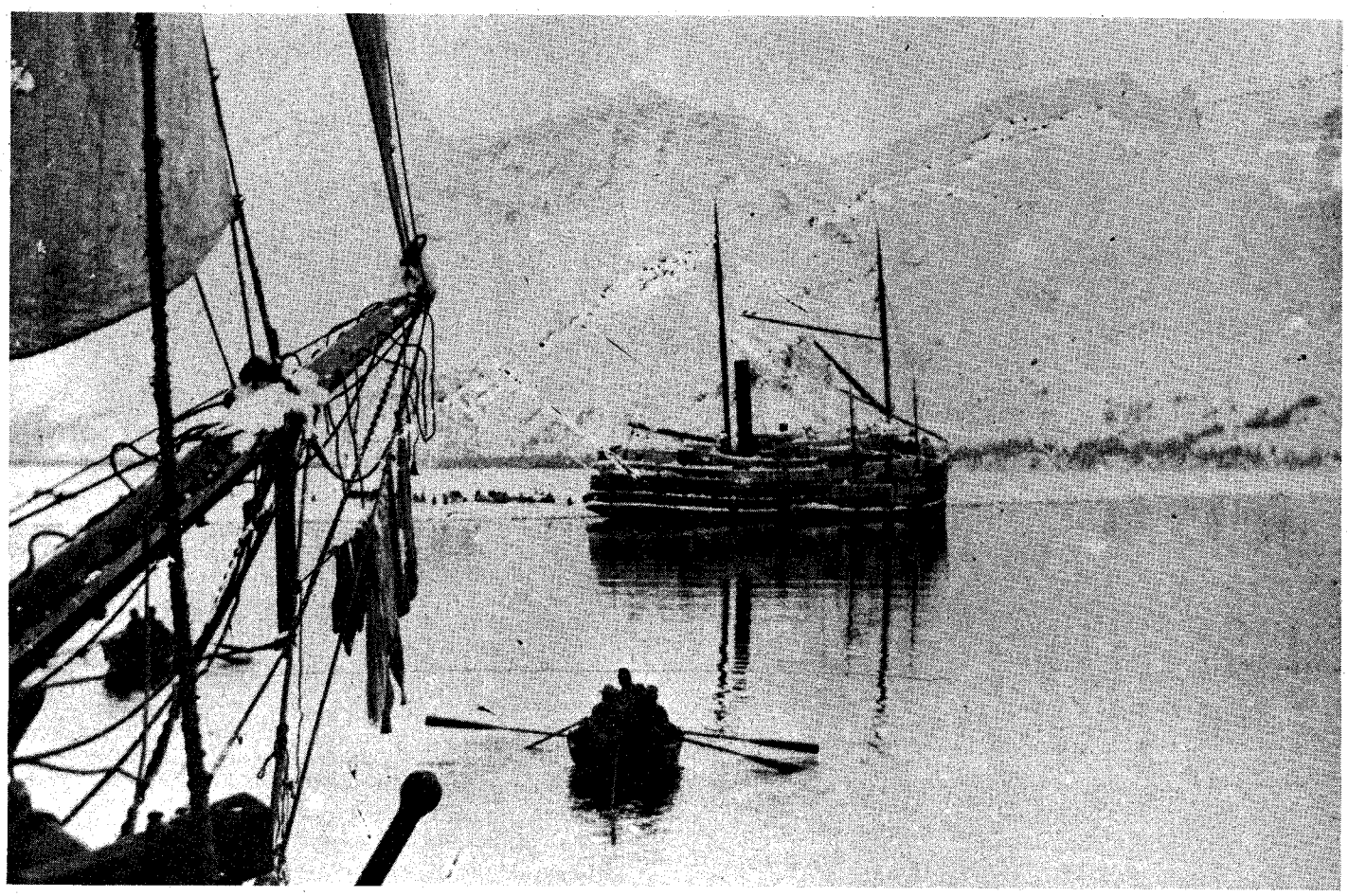
**Above, a portable smithy was one of the larger and more difficult objects dragged over the glaciers. Below, the ship *Excelsior* in Valdes Bay.**

ened to the ice when the steam cranes were put to work and tons of freight raised from the hold and dumped a quarter of a mile from safety. It took some few minutes for the voyagers to absorb this situation, then every man went to work in feverish haste to get his individual possessions to the shore.

The scheme proved ineffectual, for the material came from the hold in such a manner that more time was spent in waiting for goods than conveying them. An organization was then effected, some few men called talesmen standing on the shore near clearings in the snow where "caches," as piles of goods were called, were to be built. The remainder of the voyagers became porters, lugging any package from the ship being directed to the proper cache by the cry of the talesman. It was an enlivening sight, those men hurrying to and fro, each bearing some sort of package.

A steam sled was tugged from the ice, the company which owned it grouping about to see it annihilate space with immense loads in tow, but it simply snorted and settled deep ino the snow. A portable smithy was brought ashore, which gave more satisfactory results. Creepers, to prevent our boots from slipping while hauling loads on the hard snow crust, were a necessity, and the enterprising blacksmith furnished them at $3.50 a pair. In Seattle they could have been bought for a quarter.

For four days we were engaged in sledding our goods from the caches to the foot of the glacier. The distance seemed double the five miles. When we arrived at the glacier, however, all weariness disappeared in the strangeness of the scene. There was a street running through about two hundred tents, those on the north side backed up against a





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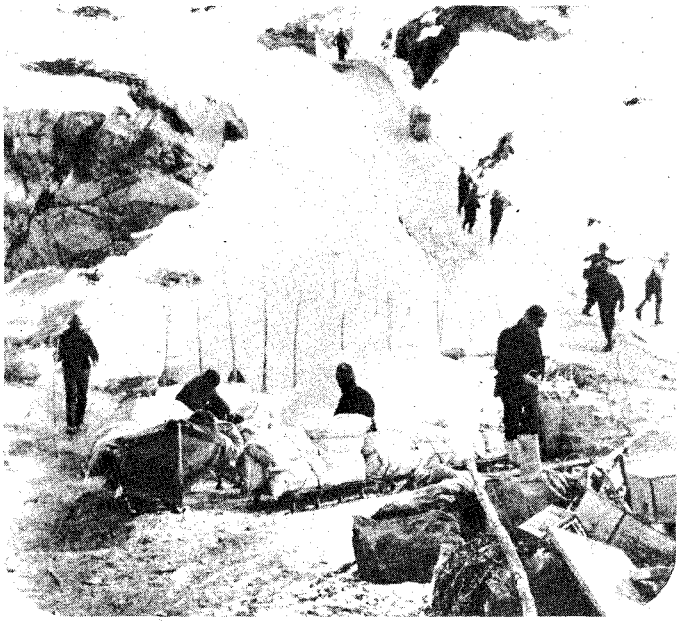

**Above (left), hauling supplies up the first bench. On right, the ancestral hall of this group of Indians. Bottom of page, Valdes as seen from the ships.**

prodigious wall of ice. Beside each tent was a cache of goods, some neatly tiered and covered with canvas, others thrown together in a careless manner.

There was a continual sledding of goods down past where we had stopped, and I was told that caches were being transferred to a convenient place for lifting onto the glacier. I went down to where the lifting was done. "First Bench" the steep pathway was called, and men came rushing down it hauling on a rope which was passed through a tackle on the heights, the other end being fastened to a loaded sled at the bottom of the bench. As the men came down the load went up.

There was really only one law of the trail. It was told very simply on a sign tacked at the foot of First Bench. "Anyone caught with goods in his possession which do not belong to him, will be hung by the neck until dead!" This was signed, "Miners Committee." Murder might be committed on slight provocation but goods were safe though the cache was five miles from the owner's camping place.

A THIRD of a mile from First Bench, Second Bench began, but in the interval there was a sharp decline, then an abrupt rise over a bald knob of veritable glare ice. It was in this short stretch that men lost their tempers, then their courage. No matter how cheerful a man's disposition, he was sobered before he had made two trips from First to Second Benches, but when he arrived in that pit, his eyes blinded from the bitter cold and incessant snow-shift, he wished he was at home. Many instances there were where men disposed of their outfits for just enough money to get out of the country.

A friend of mine solicited my assistance in getting a large rock from the bottom to the top of this bench, and when, later, he released it over the mouth of a chasm, he held his watch and counted thirty seconds while still the sound of bumping against ragged edges reached us. There was a sickening sensation to it all and I could listen no longer.

When I first saw "Third Bench" I had a touch of cold feet. We were twenty-four hours making this bench. There were three lifts running along a narrow hogback, or ice shelf, with frightful ravines on either side; and here tacklers and packers fought their way up. It was pandemonium. Ten ropes dragged the snow at the same time. A pitiless icy blast and blinding storm of sleet added to the discomfort of the occasion. Tacklers placed obstructions in front of other loads to gain personal advantage.

When our last load was perched on the heights I was filled with amazement at what I saw. Two hundred thousand pounds of freight rested among the clouds—provisions, boats, ammunition, guns, clothing, a portable sawmill, every-

*(Continued on page 36)*

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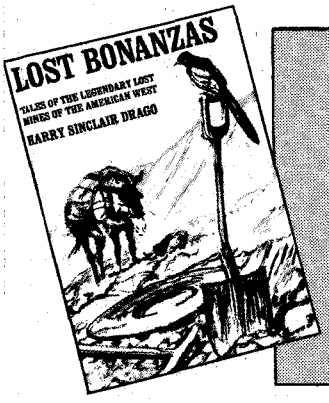


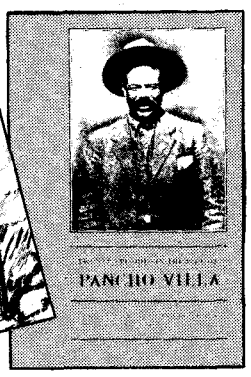


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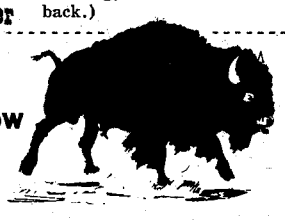

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## Under the Devil's Blanket

*(Continued from page 33)*

thing necessary for the movement of an army. Napoleon's crossing of the Alps was no more astounding feat than this unorganized effort of men after gold. From Pizarro to the present, there stands no instance in gold hunting where more onerous conditions have been overcome.

Making our cache tight against wind and weather, we drew our camp outfit about half a mile farther to a sort of plateau where other tents had been pitched. In the morning a blizzard was raging and it was considered dangerous to try to proceed. A man attempting to cover his cache, although within two hundred feet of a tent, lost his way and falling into a crevasse, perished.

For three days we kept in our sleeping bags though often we were routed out to re-erect the tent. We had no way of producing heat, for wood would have been consumed like tinder in that fearful blast. Besides, wood was worth $200 a cord on "Third Bench." We ate shipbread and read an almanac for excitement.

On the third day the storm ceased. Five feet of snow had fallen. Immediately preparations were made to continue the march. In trail breaking two men on snowshoes act as scouts, and their work is wearisome and dangerous. Affixed under each arm is a pole which projects ten feet in front and behind and which serves to break a fall if a crevasse is encountered. Around the waist of each scout is a rope—held, thirty feet in the rear by two other men, also on snowshoes—then comes the sled brigade.

Our first weight carriers hauled toboggans, the load being 50 pounds, the weight to a sled increasing until in the rear, 300 pounds was easily hauled on the scientifically constructed highway.

A mile a day, with one's entire outfit was considered excellent work on the glacier. On the fifth day we moved north from Third Bench with our last possessions, and moving forward began in earnest.

EVERYTHING comes to him who waits, and to us finally came the government. First it came in the shape of a quarter hundred blue-coats, who could go a wonderfully long time without eating, and who, when tired, scooped out a hole in the snow and slept. We were not especially interested in these fellows who wanted to know everything but preferred to inquire rather than find out for themselves. They asked us why this ice was blue, and how did we know?

Next the government came in the shape of Mexican bronchos, with provender for the quarter hundred blue-coats. The first bore long planks on their sides, like shafts. These planks were to bridge crevasses. The animals picked their way gingerly. Not a living thing was in sight and the silence was awe-inspiring even to beasts.

Before the government came, we had shifted as best we might, and taking it all in all we did well enough. A brigade was of use in a place like this but outside of helping us over the holes it was unnecessary. We thought they would claim all the credit, and sure enough they did though a hundred of us will testify that we showed them the way.

**A supply cache.**

Before planks came onto the ice we had a method of our own in crossing crevasses and although there may be a hundred more convenient ways, the amount of courage a stout rope around his waist gives one is wonderful, even though holes eight hundred feet deep are on either side.

I now hitched up with a man named Smith. Smith was a New York man, thoroughly experienced in roughing it and versed in mountain climbing, boating rapid rivers and woodcraft, otherwise I would not now be telling this story.

That afternoon Smith and I started for a camp called "Under the Summit," recently established. There was a fifth bench but it was without especial feature, being a steady haul up a steep incline about a mile long. At the top of this there were two miles of level which approached the last bench. On Smith's advice we had reduced our combined outfit to eight hundred pounds. He said that the ice lasted only eight miles beyond the top of the bench now before us, and that we could buy provisions for less than we now sold, as many were getting tired of the hard work.

Besides our joint outfit Smith carried forty pounds of tobacco, and this was my especial charge. He soberly told me that he would take care of my life if I would do the same by the tobacco, and I am proud and pleased to say that each was faithful to his trust.

When we reached the foot of the last bench I sat on my sled and drew on my entire reserve courage. In front was a wall of ice 1,100 feet high, its slant height being 4,900 feet. It was a fitting climax to the most onerous task ever performed by man. It was simply stupendous.

To reach the summit of the ice mountain, an ordinary tackling outfit must work sixty hours, while for a packer to raise his goods, one hundred hours must be consumed. Through a chance fortunate for me, a large tackling outfit traded, I to doctor their manager and they to lift our 800 pounds. Lucky for me that part of my outfit was pills and medicine and also lucky that I knew a bit about using them.

When finally we started up the summit the snow was falling and a grayness rested on everything. There were three trails practically paralleling one another, and these were occupied continuously by tacklers. Every few minutes a team of from six to twelve men passed down the hill, working in pairs. An empty sled was held as high as a man's breast and through the standards two poles were thrust. The first four men worked against these poles, two on either side of the sled. Behind them the remainder of the men hauled directly on the rope. One thousand feet below where the team was struggling to get it into motion, was the loaded sled. The haulers would be thrown to the right or left according as the team balanced, then there would be a sudden give, and the haul had begun.

When an outfit had raised its last load to the summit, the men cheered lustily, as men would who knew that the worst was over after fifty-five days of wonderful endurance under great hardship.

SMITH and I went into camp up here, though it was not the general custom to do so. We were not as high as the supporting mountains and we moved as near them as possible that they might furnish a windbreak. Above our heads was an ugly lip of snow bulging out



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over a mountain crest much as a swollen drop of water would hang to a window sash.

I objected to camping under it but Smith said we would be safe for a night and as he ran that part of the business I went to sleep feeling that the tobacco was at the "owner's risk." When we awoke we quickly changed our camp, for the ugly lip had grown uglier and a fierce snow storm was raging. For two days we were confined to the tent. On the night of the second day there came a severe shock to the ice, followed by a report as from a cannon. Rushing to the tent door we saw that the lip of snow had fallen and that our last camping place was unrecognizable. For a few seconds there was silence, indescribable, then as though a giant contact had put in motion some terrible subterranean machinery, the very side of the summit seemed to give way, and a million tons of snow started down toward the little town under the bench, and buried it.

There are a hundred men who were in that town that night who will never sleep without thinking of that slide. It seems incredible that but three lives were lost. The rescues are thrillingly told today, in all parts of the world, wherever those first explorers of the Copper River country have dispersed.

To come down eight miles after a climb of eighteen would seem no great task, still there are more comfortable conditions than to have one's sled slew on a sidling trail and tip over every few minutes. Four miles from the summit we caught a glimpse of the promised land, then came pitch-holes for two miles which tried our patience. I saw strong men cry in vexation over the awful haul through the broken ice.

But everything must have an end, and we found one sooner than we expected. There was a last abrupt incline, down which my sled started, and in trying to rescue it I lost control of my legs and went in another direction. We both landed wrong side up in the Alaskan interior!

There was a town started four miles from the glacier, it being called "Twelve Mile" on account of its distance from the summit, but I preferred to rest awhile on this plat of glass within a mile of the great ice. After fifty-nine days of glacial experience, to sleep on warm earth, go to the stream and fill one's skin, tight up, with clear cold water, to wash clothing and hang it on shrubbery to dry, to hear birds sing—it was delightful, even though fleas inhabited the new-found land.

Every day the rocky river bed near our camp took on more water, for the glacier was giving down torrents under the June sun. In the morning we would find that a new waterfall had been born during the night. This stream was but a creek yesterday.

Up in the mountains, bears sunned themselves. I could see them gambol from my tent door. At night fires shone on the mountainsides. Indians were signaling the progress of the white man down the canyon.

One day I went back to the glacier. The ice was the color of slate, but away in the distance loomed one of the two great peaks which support the summit. Day or night, I never saw that peak when it was not colored by the sun.

Still the floods came until the stream of a few days ago was a river in a rage, which a timid man was afraid to cross. For some weeks Twelve Mile was the principal camp in Western Alaska. Many permanent caches were made here, the owners going down the river under a light prospecting outfit. At a conservative estimate a half million dollars worth of freight went down the Klutena that spring and summer, where before, since the beginning of time, not a hundred dollars worth had floated.

Boats of every description were built at Twelve Mile, from the fancy yawl to the scow which could not tip over. Smith and I built a boat and paid a man $1.25 for a quarter-pound of oakum with which to tighten the seams. Pitch to hold the oakum was plentiful for there were thousands of spruce trees at hand and running sap freely. Alaska was glorious in color and the moss at the foot of the forests was softer than the finest silk.

It would be difficult for one comfortably housed in civilization to realize the risk to life taken each day along that roaring torrent. One morning as we were loading our boat, the body of the man who had sold us the oakum whizzed past. Smith stopped in his work and ruminated on the possible whereabouts

*(Continued on page 40)*

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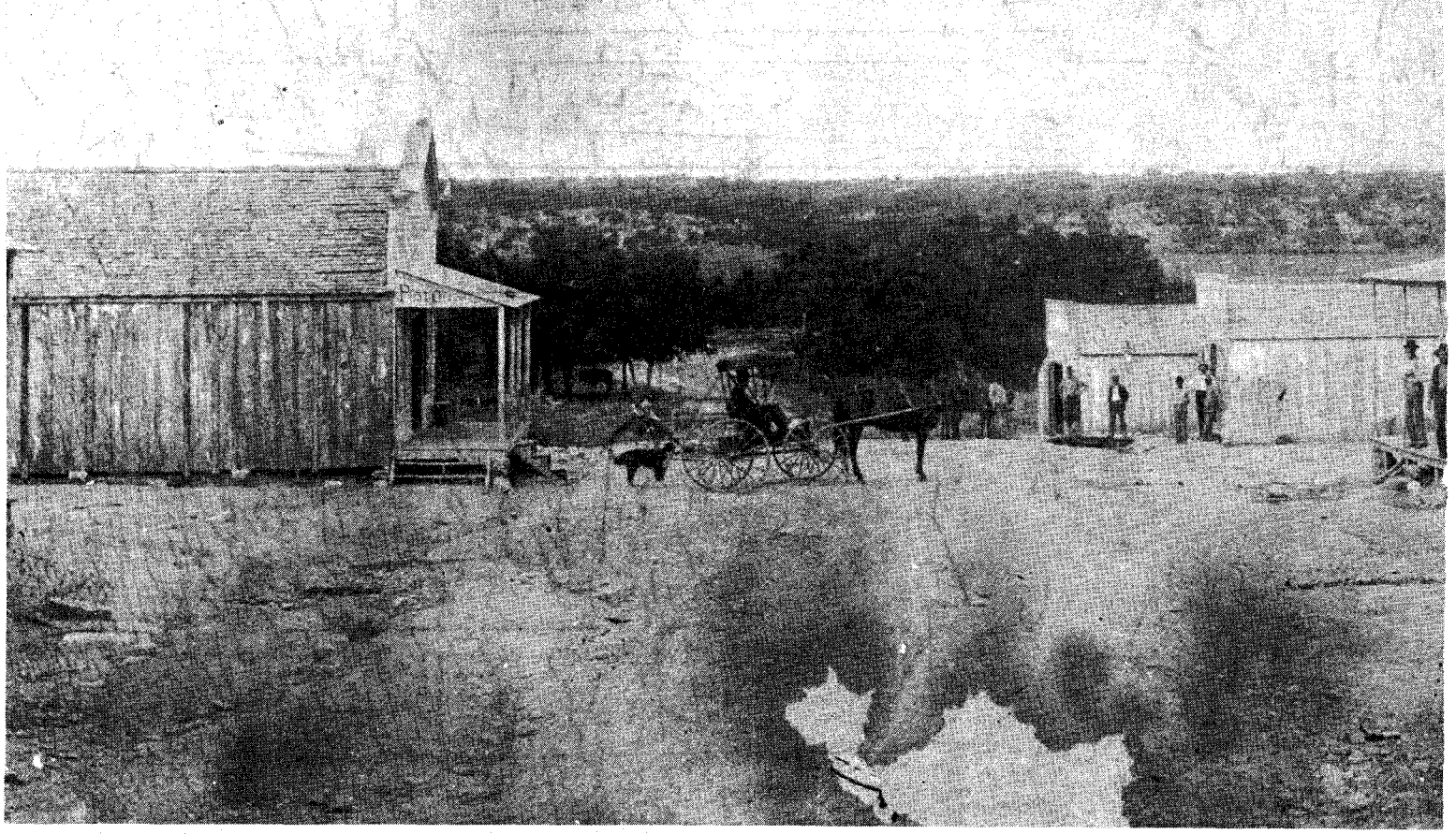
# THE BENEVOLENT

## The presence of a Yankee still dwells in this unlikely land – and a beloved Yankee at that!



SOME of the older people of four central Texas counties still "take their medicine" according to the recommendations of Dr. Lucius Hine, an Ohio Yankee who died more than fifty years ago. He brought culture to his community and fought superstition; yet he sometimes had his own mystic beliefs. Dr. Hine never could explain even to himself why he bought a railroad ticket to the end of the line as a way of deciding where he would begin a country medical practice which would last for forty years.

After getting off the Santa Fe train in Killeen, Texas he got a job tending sheep on the Bigham ranch. He would not tell the locals that he was a recent graduate of the medical school at The University of Cincinnati. This secrecy would enable him to select a place to be a doctor without others influencing his decision—or so he reasoned. Bigham, however, was not completely hoodwinked. When his new hired man told Bigham his plans a few months later, the rancher said, "I am glad to hear you have another trade. I knew when you first took the flock to pasture that you knew nothing about sheep." Hine's dress, speech, and soft hands told of another life.

Having been raised in a comfortable home, he was expected to follow journalism and take over the Cincinnati *Gazette* when his father Alonzo retired. Not so; the son would imitate his father in plotting his own future. Alonzo had graduated from law school, but the smell of printing presses changed all that. When help was scarce during the Civil War, editor Hine would go to Gettysburg himself to cover the ceremonies there in November of 1863.

FIFTEEN MILES south of Killeen was the little town of Oakalla. Flowing through it was Rocky Creek, one of the more beautiful wild streams in Texas. It reminded Dr. Hine of Ohio.

The people there had no physician and they were delighted when the young man decided to become one of them. They were getting more than they realized; this new citizen was better trained than most country medics of a century ago. He could perform major surgery, and it was sometimes necessary. Sending a patient forty miles to the nearest hospital at Temple was impractical due to poor roads and pioneer modes of transportation. Dr. Hine once had to amputate the leg of a nine-year-old farm boy who had been bitten by a rattlesnake. There was no time for a long haul to a hospital; the lad was already in a critical condition. Of course the youthful snake victim



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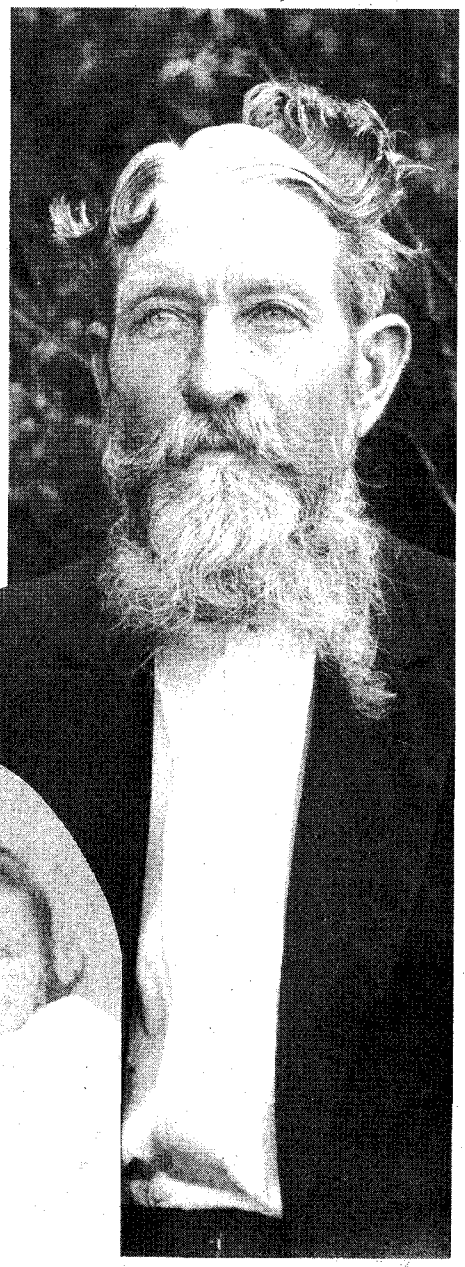
# GHOST

By MORRIS BELL
Photos Courtesy Author

At left, Oakalla, Texas as Dr. Hine first saw it. The pecan trees in the center are near Rocky Creek. Below, Dr. Lucius Hine. He practiced medicine over forty years at Oakalla. Only once during that time did he get to visit his native Ohio.



Above, Alonzo Hine, father of Lucius. Alonzo heard Lincoln at Gettysburg, and walked twelve miles before finding a telegraph operator to file his story. The grandson he holds became an Admiral in World War II.

would never be able to farm, so he pursued his education. Jack Gillum served more than forty years in Georgetown, Texas as tax collector of Williamson County. He's still living, some seventy-two years after his encounter with the reptile. "He took my leg but saved my life," said Gillum when he was interviewed in 1973. Dr. Hine was his uncle.

Once the young doctor was called to treat a girl who was choking. He inserted the tube of his fountain pen as a temporary windpipe. Many were surprised that she survived—the doctor more than anyone else! But fifty years later the "girl" is still living.

In community activities he was a "joiner" but not to enhance his profession. (He always had more people to treat than any two doctors should handle.) He organized a Sunday School, a literary society, and a community club. He took an active part in all the many things he sponsored—truly a Samson's lock to the people he served. He was good on the stage, and I still remember how he recited "The Raven." This went over big with the adults, but scared the kids to bits. The large crowd present was not only a tribute to his entertainment talents, but to his organizational abilities in getting three small schools to merge into a stronger district.

About 1890, when the temperance movement was getting stronger, he got together a cast and took the play "Ten Nights in a Bar Room" to neighboring towns. Dr. Hine played the role of "The Drunkard," and "Little Nell" was played by his fifteen-year-old sister-in-law, Nellie Gillum (the only one of the group still living in 1973). In the play he had to hit the little girl over the head with a whiskey bottle, and some of the small fry present thought the good doctor had gone through a real change to a Mr. Hyde. They squealed accordingly.

Dr. Lucius Seneca Hine was a direct descendant of Thomas Hine who came to the new Connecticut colony with founder Thomas Hooker in 1637. These "Westerners" were withdrawing from the Puritans of the Massachusetts area who seemed too stultified to make progress on the frontier. Later some of them would buy land in the Western Reserve and end up in the new state of Ohio.

Alonzo Hine would inherit a fair amount of money from these lands, but he would have little to give his son Lucius other than enough to pay his way through medical school. As a publisher, Alonzo made several mistakes which prevented him from making the fortune he sought. He refused to handle the business of William McGuffey who just had to have a firm print his six million primary readers—neither man, of course, having the least idea such would ever happen.

Also, efforts to print reform magazines were costly. One of Alonzo's early partners in this field ran off with the funds and left Alonzo to pay the bills. Ned Buntline was such a crook (mostly by choice) that a later biography of him by Jay Monagham would bear the title *The Great Rascal.*

Two other business associates, Felix

*(Continued on page 55)*



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## Under the Devil's Blanket

*(Continued from page 37)*

of our dollar and a quarter.

Goods that had accumulated enormous value, by reason of labor cost, were lost in a minute and small camps along the shore told of sudden enforced landings.

THE principal town after leaving Twelve Mile was "Saw Mill." To come to Saw Mill from upriver resembled, to a certain extent, coming to Boston from the rural districts. One could buy anything at Saw Mill from a pound of nails to a salted mine. Boats were built here and by waiting one's chance you could buy sawed lumber for $125 per thousand feet. There were a few log houses here and the game of draw poker held forth in many tents.

Our next camping place was delightful in the extreme, though at the end of thirty miles of turbulent water. Over across was an immense rock (Gibraltar, I called it and the name was maintained as long as I remained in the country). I had never known such a land.

A lake, twelve miles long and five miles wide, with eight miles more of it after an abrupt turn, lay before us. Salmon were plentiful, eight to twelve pounders, and we caught them with a seine or gaffed them in the spawning brooks. Only those who have eaten this fish fresh from its native element may judge how delicious they were.

From this camp we made many expeditions after gold. Once we thought we had struck it. There were many cheers and men danced around the campfires that night. The next day after a session with a bottle of nitric acid our fortune went up in fumes. Our find had been pyrites of iron.

At the lower end of Klutena Lake, where the river again takes up its tread toward the Copper, was located Klutena City, whose main thoroughfare, Mosquito Avenue, ran through about a hundred tents—a big city for Alaska of 1898.

Below Klutena City the river narrowed, flowed swiftly but silently and was very crooked. The banks at this time of year were covered with a pink phlox-like plant which was very beautiful. The flora of Western Alaska is stunted, but hardy, and grows almost into the snow-line. Geraniums have a blue flower. There is no vivid coloring and the earth does not warm sufficiently to produce such. Vegetables never ripen, the season being a month too short for kitchen gardens.

Three miles below Klutena City was Amie's Landing, and from any height below here Mount Drum, the magnificent, looms above all the peaks.

This was Indian country and an old Indian made me an offer that was easy to refuse. He wanted to give me his daughter for an old stew pan and my rifle. He was quite incensed when I refused the trade.

The Indian women used to tell their young about the Ice Spirit with its hundreds of gaping mouths which swallow run-away papooses, all the time pointing to the cloud which lives in the southwestern sky. We knew that cloud which lives in the southwestern sky for it had hung over us for sixty suns and moons. More like a dense mist it seemed, now laying flat to the great ice, now rising to let the sun play wondrous coloring over the immense stretch of white—but always there.

One day I came upon a man standing and watching the great white blot, his ordinary task unheeded. Feeling the same unspeakable fascination, I stood and watched beside him, and I heard him call it "The Devil's Blanket."

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## "Rascals" and Rangers

*(Continued from page 13)*

abandoned and a new start made. At the inside end of the entries or spokes thirty-six feet of coal face was allotted to each miner and this arrangement extended all around the mine—again resembling the rim or tire of a wheel. Along this rim, or along the coal face, air was forced by big ventilating fans, thereby giving the miners a fresh current of air at all times."

EASTERN MINERS found labor in the Thurber mines difficult because the work space was limited to an area of 27" to 37". The vein was thin, and the miner had to lie on his shoulder and hip and keep his arm free to swing a pick above him. Frequently he loosened coal by setting off a small charge of dynamite. As he removed the coal, he tossed the dirt and slate into the vacancy caused by the removal of the coal.

Empty rail cars were available for each miner, and as he filled the car, he fastened his tag on the front so that the weight of the coal would be credited to his account. A check weigher was responsible for seeing that miners were given correct credit.

The operation of getting the filled cars to the surface was described by an early writer for *Farm and Ranch* magazine: "The coal cars used, hold about a ton each, and are drawn by demure looking, ducklegged little mules, which are splendidly trained to trot along without bit or driver, and are as tractable and obedient as any other part of the complicated mechanism of a coal mine. Once transported to the bowels of the earth, they never see daylight again until their working days are over. They seem to thrive on the work and to enjoy it. . . ."

The mules, however, caused the miners some concern. Given only a thirty-minute lunch break, many of the miners preferred to eat lunches in the pit. Occasionally, the miner would find that rats had eaten his meal during the work hours. So long as the mules were stabled in the mines, rats were numerous, and there were complaints that the rodents removed lids from the lunch pails in order to reach food. Miners soon learned to hang their pails from overhead timbers or to place heavy rocks on them.

At 5:30 p.m. miners put away their tools and went to the elevators. The cager sounded three blasts to signal that the miners were ready to leave the mine. Sometimes the Black Diamond was not at the mine, and the men had to await transportation back to their homes. These long, painful delays were caused by the fact that the same crew that delivered the miners to their work each morning also served as the coal switching crew. They were responsible for delivering loaded cars at Thurber Junction, for picking up empty cars, and for distributing the empties at the various mines.

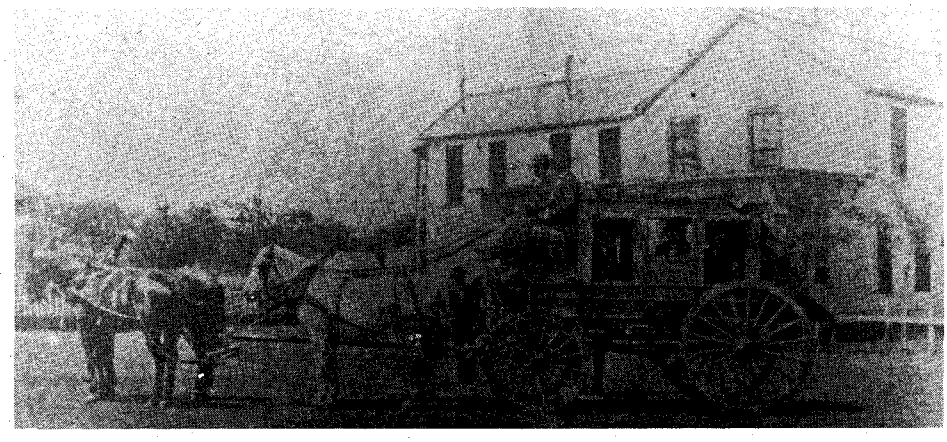
Frequently the miners had to stop digging in the afternoon because there was a shortage of empty cars. Finally in May 1905, a committee of miners conferred with W. K. Gordon and insisted that the company provide a sufficient number of empties each day, or if circumstances made it necessary to cut short the working day, to provide transportation home for the laborers.

Company officials seemed deaf for a time, then on two successive mornings the miners met the train only to learn there were not enough empty cars. The entire labor crew returned home. On the third morning, check weighers announced there would be enough empties for the men to work the entire day.

IN 1903 the United Mine Workers of America decided to sponsor a movement to organize the Thurber miners, and W. K. Gordon had reason to believe the big push would be made on Labor Day. Taking a clue from the late Colonel Hunter, he wrote Governor S. W. T. Lanham to send a detachment of Rangers. In answer, Adjutant-General John A.

*(Continued on page 44)*

**Thurber's Hotel Knox.** Courtesy Hazel Miller





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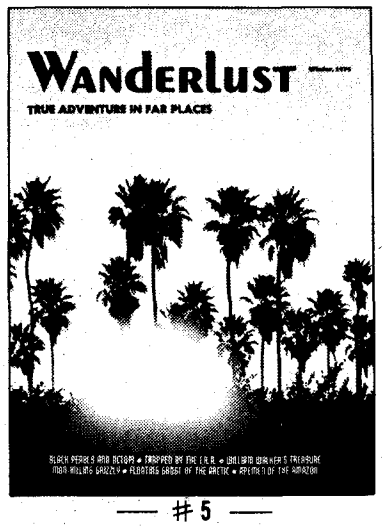


— #5 —

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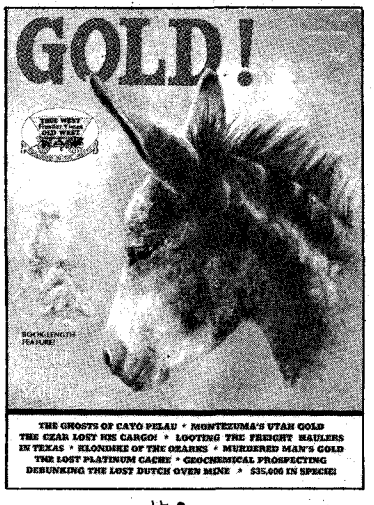


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By DONALD N. BENTZ
Photos Courtesy Author

Charles Alzamora

Photos Courtesy Arizona Historical Society Library, Tucson

# Frying Pan Charlie

WHEN Charles Alzamora died in Tucson, Arizona on March 7, 1923 most people did not recognize his name. After all, the seventy-nine-year-old man, although he had lived in the Old Pueblo for almost fifty years, had survived most of his cronies of the turbulent Territorial days. In fact, it was only after his demise that many people learned, for the first time, his correct name. Only when word was spread that "Frying Pan Charlie," or "Pan" for short, was dead, did the old and the young of Tucson call at the Reilly Undertaking Company to pay their last respects to one of the most interesting characters of the city.

Alzamora was born in California in 1844 and arrived in Tucson in the late 1870s. Practically nothing is known of his early life and, as was customary in pioneer Western towns and mining camps, few personal questions were ever asked. He was simply called "Johnny" or "Johny."

One of the first references to him, in the *Arizona Weekly Star* (Tucson), of October 20, 1881, is a perfect example of the journalistic writing and gambling jargon of that time:

"Johony [*sic*]-behind-the-frying-pan is loser again, and his lunch stand closed up yesterday. He is in doubt whether to attribute the disaster to lack of patronage or a bad play he made. It seems that he played the Scotch boy straight up and heeled from the broiler taking the lunch spread to win. It might have come his way if he had only coppered the coffee-pot; but there is where he missed it, and the butcher and baker heartlessly raked in his checks."

THE Great Register of Pima County, Territory of Arizona, duly recorded Charles Alzamora as a citizen of Tucson in 1882, 1884, 1888, and 1890.

George Hand, a pioneer, soldier, butcher, saloonkeeper and, in his last years, janitor of the Pima County Courthouse in Tucson, kept a diary from 1861 to 1887. In it he made several references such as: "I heard that Frying Pan Johnny was taken to the pesthouse today," or "Frying Pan Johnny is doing well."

Charles Alzamora, of course, was not exactly a pillar of the town in the strictest meaning of that term. He was a gambler, among other things, and a sec-

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ond-rate one at that, but he was colorful.

For many years Pan ran a small lunch wagon in front of the old Congress Hall Saloon, situated at the southeast corner of Congress and Meyer Streets. Charles Owen Brown was the proprietor of that illustrious long L-shaped adobe establishment, which derived its name from the fact that it housed some early sessions of the Arizona Territorial Legislature.

Pan couldn't have picked a better location for his lunch wagon. Balls, receptions, and political meetings were held at the Congress Hall Saloon. As reported in the *Arizona Daily Star* in 1910, "Practically half the frontier history was made within its walls. General and Mrs. Crook were entertained on the occasion of their first visit to Tucson, in Congress Hall. There was no social caste in those dangerous days. Snobbishness had yet to be born in the old town." And Frying Pan Charlie was a part of it all.

He did not gain the sobriquet of "Frying Pan" merely because he ran a small lunch wagon. Rather it was due to the fact that when a particularly good gambling hunch came to him, he would frequently rush from his lunch wagon—with a frying pan still in his hand—and hurry to the nearest gaming table to play that hunch. More often than not he lost.

Many years ago a magazine article told of how one day a prominent citizen of Tucson dropped in at the lunch wagon for a late breakfast of ham and eggs. The price was sixty cents. Pan told the customer that he was out of ham and eggs, but if the customer would give him thirty cents he would hurry out and buy the necessities and rush right back and prepare them. The hungry citizen agreed to this arrangement. However, Pan was gone for quite some time, and when he finally did reappear, empty-handed, he seemed to be very dejected. The hungry, and by now irate, customer asked where his ham and eggs were.

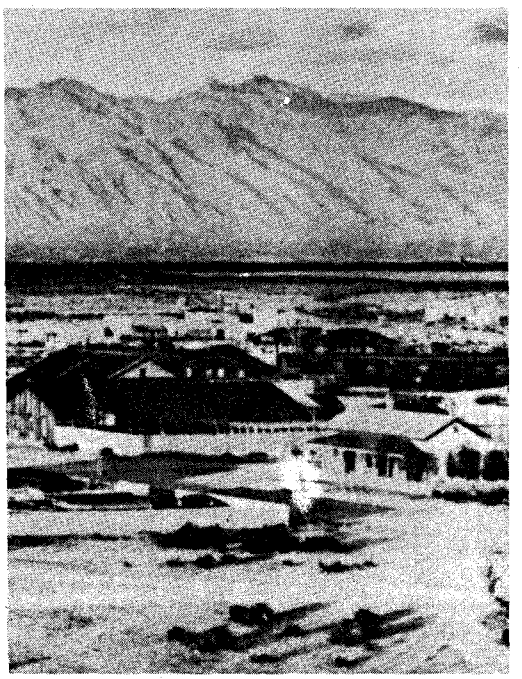
"I played the thirty cents for doubles or quits," Pan admitted, "and lost."

MOSE DRACHMAN was a son of a pioneer Tucson family, although he himself was born in San Francisco on November 16, 1870 during his parents vacation there. Mose was returned to Tucson when only a few months old and lived in that city for the rest of his life. As a youth he worked in many of his relatives' various business establishments along Congress Street, one of them being Tucson's first cigar store which was sandwiched between the numerous saloons and gambling halls. It was inevitable that Mose Drachman would know Frying Pan Charlie, and when Mose died in 1935 he left behind in his reminiscences some impressions of his colorful friend.

Drachman recalled that Pan, in the 1880s, was the leader of a group of men called the "Sons of Rest." These men were a worthless, shiftless, and lazy lot, but they were not vicious. Chiefly they were hangers-on around the gambling tables, working as boosters for the gamblers. Boosters, or "cappers" as they were also known, were given money or chips to play at the tables where action was slow. Few legitimate gamblers cared to play at empty or near-empty tables, so Pan and men like him helped furnish a proper atmosphere. Today people are still used for the same reason in legal gambling halls and auctions of various types, but now they are called shills.

**Charles Owen Brown at age 25. He was the founder of the Congress Hall Saloon, and a good friend of Frying Pan Charlie.**

## His footprints on the Sands of Time wobble a little; any mark he made took place at the gaming tables; but he wasn't a bore and he served with distinction as leader of the "Sons of Rest"



**At left, Tucson, Arizona Territory in the 1880s.**

Pan was slightly more ambitious than the rest of the boosters. He usually had some type of menial job, and when his fellow Sons of Rest were without funds he would give them a little pocket money for food and shelter or to tide them over for a few days until Lady Luck would smile once again.

IT WAS during these years that Frying Pan became enamored of the night life of Tucson. He thoroughly enjoyed gambling, drinking, and carousing in general. Even when open gambling became illegal in the Old Pueblo, Pan's infatuation for night life remained. He became a well-known figure around some of the all-night restaurants. Willing listeners were always on hand to hear him tell stories and anecdotes of the "old days."

Mose Drachman remembered, "He had traveled almost all over the world and was a particularly interesting man to talk with. Everybody liked Pan."

In the last part of his life he eked out a precarious living at anything that was offered. For the few years just before his short illness and subsequent death, he was night clerk at the Windsor Hotel, but lived at the Park View Hotel, still as spry as a youth of twenty despite his seventy-nine years. When he died a part of Old Tucson died with him.

Though Pan's death occurred on March 7, his burial in the Holy Hope Cemetery did not take place until March 15. The intervening week was spent in trying to locate any living relatives but none was found. Another problem presented itself when it was discovered that $350, which Pan had entrusted to the safekeeping of a friend, had disappeared along with the faithless friend. Authorities said that the funeral and burial of the old pioneer might necessarily have to be conducted at the expense of Pima County, unless someone volunteered to pay the necessary expense.

Such a friend was found in the person of Louis Gherna, proprietor of a local

*(Continued on page 49)*



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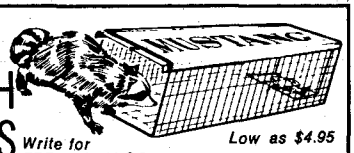

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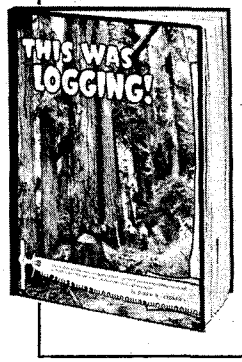


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## "Rascals" and Rangers

*(Continued from page 40)*

Hulen ordered Captain John H. Rogers and several men to Thurber.

Gordon drew up a plan to combat the Union. He would open the club house and grounds—normally off limits to miners and their families—and would spread, at company expense, a barbecue.

The Union organizers also had tactics. They hired Harry Conners, son of one of the miners, and provided him with a saddle horse. He was instructed to ride among the more than 11,000 persons attending the barbecue and on a given signal to spread word that a Union organizer was ready to enroll new members. The organizer would be at Lyra, eight miles away.

The scheme worked, and a number of miners followed Harry Conners, Pied Piper style, to Lyra, where sixty miners joined the United Mine Workers.

The camp was ablaze with the fire of Unionism, William M. Wardjon, International Organizer for the United Mine Workers, said of the occasion. The Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* noted that the plot had been cooked up by Wardjon and District President Pete Hanraty.

Hanraty was well known to W. K. Gordon, so the district union officer had donned a beard and mustache and made his way into the mining camp. For two nights he slept in the oak woods near town, and on the third day he visited company headquarters seeking work. Gordon assigned him to the brick yards, where he did little work but talked much of unionism. Then, according to plans, Joe Finiolio, the Italian organizer, made his way into Thurber.

When miners demanded a raise, and the company rejected it, more than 1000 of them turned to the United Mine Workers. On the following day, a number of miners assembled on the Rock Creek Bridge, four miles from Thurber. On one side of the creek, Mexican miners repeated the union oath, read in Spanish. On the other side of the creek, the union message was translated into Polish and Italian.

One black, after hearing the talk, exclaimed, "We are going to have every thing union after this—union 'lasses, union battercakes, union steaks—everything will be union."

With 1000 men out of work, a stillness settled over the operation. Miners, in groups, discussed their plans. Some hoped to secure employment in the mines at Lyra; others had their thoughts on California; some prepared to return to Italy. Clusters of emotional Italians embraced each other, tears flowing as they said farewells. Some prayed that the saints watch over their Thurber friends.

Dozens, in broken English, took leave of W. K. Gordon. One Italian choked back tears as he said, "Hello! Hello!"—the extent of his English. And some Italians, with a fondness for American shoes, bought six pairs before climbing into their buggies.

Soon a stream of carts, wagons, and buggies crammed with miners, their families, and their household goods, began leaving Thurber. By September 14, the silence was eerie. Not only had the mines closed, but the ice plant and the brick plant also ceased to operate.

Gordon attempted to recruit other workers. Eighteen arrived from Pennsylvania and were met at the train by Rangers, company officials, and union agents. These miners declined to add their names to the company payroll.

Eventually, the coal company yielded, and the first official union labor meeting in Thurber was held September 20, 1903. On September 27, Edgar L. Marston, company president, granted permission for the miners to make purchases outside town, agreed for them to select their own physicians, and agreed to abolish the required train fare. The fence around the community was discussed, but no issue was made of it.

Colonel Hunter had not lived to see Thurber become the only "little city wherein every worker was a dues-paying member of his respective union." He died November 8, 1902, still maintaining that there was no place in Thurber for organized labor.

By 1919 Thurber had fifteen mines in operation, and miners still sought higher wages. Their strike at this time, however, was ill-timed. The rail company had replaced its coal cars with oil engines and was pushing freight cars from Texarkana to El Paso by the power of oil. In the fall of 1918 W. K. Gordon, who had been manager of the coal mines, secured leases for oil and gas and bought some wells near Ranger, not too far from the Thurber base.

"This is the greatest thing in Texas," Governor Sayers said of Thurber in 1902. And in a state notorious for its brags, the chief executive's enthusiasm was no mere political pat on the back.

Yet not too long ago, Thurber was called a ghost town. The population figure of eleven would tend to support that label. Gordon's leasing of oil wells increased the population of the town for a time—while miners' homes were being demolished, expensive homes on fashionable New York Hill were under construction. The town was building; it was moving. Thurber was not dying; it was moving.

Not so. Miners' homes disappeared first, then the bricks from the executive homes on the hill were carted off to become patios, dairy barns, or houses in nearby communities. The company moved its offices to Fort Worth, and by 1933 all executives at Thurber had loaded their records and desks. Except in legend, Thurber was dead.

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## Private War of Henson Wiseman

*(Continued from page 17)*

William Gyte, that a family in the neighborhood would be killed "about the time the corn was in the roasting ear."

Apparently, the absence of any hostile action had caused Pheobe to regard Chaska's words as merely an idle threat. When a neighbor spied her and asked if she didn't fear leaving her children alone, Pheobe replied that there wasn't an Indian "within 1,000 miles." She crossed to Yankton, made her purchases, and began her return. When a heavy



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thunderstorm slowed her progress, she stopped in at a neighbor's. She was invited to stay the night, but refused for she wanted to get back to the children as soon as possible. Pheobe walked on, along a bottom trail, and stopped to rest so close to home that she wondered why the children and dogs hadn't heard and come out to greet her.

Picking up her parcels, she began the end of her journey, and at last reached the clearing. It was quiet. Something was wrong. Books were strewn across the rain-sodden yard, their limp pages stirring feebly in the wind. There was a wide smear of red across the door latch. Terrified, Pheobe broke into a run toward the cabin and stumbled over something in the wet grass. It was the body of her eight-year-old, Henry, shot in the back. She staggered to the door and saw Arthur and his ten-year-old brother, Andrew, lying on the blood-soaked floor. An Indian lay not far from them.

Certain that all five of her children had been murdered, Pheobe fled through the dusk. She was afraid to take the road, for fear Indians would find her, so she stumbled through the brush until she reached the tiny settlement of St. James, three miles away.

St. James had nine men, but none of them dared to return so soon to the scene of the massacre. The next morning the men rode out, taking a nine-mile route through the open prairie so no adversaries could ambush them. They came to the Wiseman cabin and found the five children. The dead Indian was gone. Henry's body lay outside the house. Arthur, his gun still in his hands, lay dead, his skull, arms, and hands crushed, the rifle barrel bent backwards. Andrew was dead beside him, shot. Hannar, the only daughter, fourteen, was not dead but was dying. The Indians had raped her, mutilated her with arrows, then put a cartridge in her mouth and lit it, tearing out her teeth. Hannar briefly recovered consciousness, but could only stare wildly about her, her eyes filled with terror. She died five days later. The youngest son, Loren, aged four, was found still alive, sitting up on the bed, his arm around the post. He asked for water, but the only other words he would say were, "Indians scared me." He had been stabbed in the left lung and died three days later. Arthur, Andrew, and Henry were buried in one grave beside the cabin. Loren and Hannar were buried beside them.

Pheobe, unable even to speak of what happened, was taken in and sheltered by neighbors. But after Hannar's burial, she slipped away from her protectors and ran away through the timber along the river. She could not be found.

IN the meantime, Henson Wiseman was in Crow Creek, nearly two hundred miles away, secure in his belief the he was helping keep the frontier safe for his own family and others. It was almost a month before he got word of what had happened to his children and his wife. He later maintained that neighbors had sent him letters, but the army had seized them, fearing that if the Nebraska company heard of the Wiseman family's fate it would mutiny and return home.

Wiseman found out about the tragedy in a particularly cruel way. Some Indians came to the Crow Creek Agency, bringing with them spoils they said had been taken by some other Indians in a massacre in Nebraska Territory. Among the plunder was a pair of girl's shoes. They looked to Wiseman like Hannar's shoes, even to the patch he had put on them. Suddenly he was somehow certain that the family who had been massacred was his, and the murdered girl to whom the shoes belonged was his daughter.

Wiseman didn't ask for leave; he informed no one of his plans. With horrified suspicion in his heart, he took his gun, mounted his horse, and started the long ride home.

He later recounted his journey. "I mounted my horse and went to camp, knowing what was before me (200 miles). I left without anything to eat, and I could get nothing until I reached Fort Randall, one hundred miles away. I traveled night and day until I reached home, stopping at the Fort two hours to get something to eat and rest my horse; there the commander of the post showed his authority. I showed fight and sixty rounds of cartridges, and told him that I was the commander of that Fort and would shoot him on the spot; that I was not a deserter but had been



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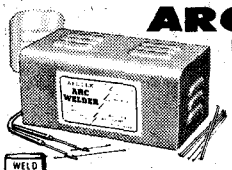

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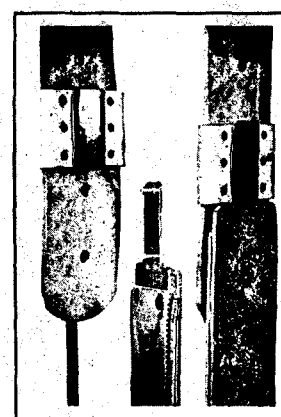

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deserted. In twenty minutes Company 'A' of my own regiment, stationed there, came to me and told me to stay at the Fort as long as I wished, and leave when I was ready.

"They gave me all I wanted. I went to Yankton reserve that night and learned from an Indian interpreter all I wanted. I wrote a letter to my colonel 'to keep all the boys and fight the Indians when found, that they had gone up James River with what they had taken from me, and I would take care of myself and northeastern Nebraska'."

Wiseman reached Yankton the next day. At Yankton Reserve he had learned of the death of his children. At Yankton itself, he was told of his wife's derangement and disappearance. He finally reached the settlement of St. James, trembling with hunger and fatigue. At his cabin he saw the graves of his children and "blood all over the house floor, dried down twenty-five days." No one knew where Pheobe was.

Wiseman rested for several days in St. James, and those who knew the man said a terrible change had come over him. Finally he set out to find Pheobe. He headed for Sioux City, and met her on Aoway Creek coming back home. She could not remember where she had been.

Wiseman wrote: "She wailed and cried and tried to tell her grief but could not, and it was a year before she could tell it all. We returned to St. James the same day, and began at once to prepare some place to live. We had no home, nothing to live on, no clothing except what we had on our backs, which we had worn for many weeks. I knew we were in a hard climate and a hard place. Many is the time my poor wife would moan in her sleep and call for her children. I would then awake her, and she would moan and bewail the sad fate of her children and would finally sob herself to sleep."

Pheobe had been two months pregnant at the time of the massacre. On March 8, 1864 she had a baby boy. Wiseman wrote that the child was "born restless under great trouble, and for two years he would cry himself to sleep and wake up crying, and now, although thirty-two years have passed, is hard to reconcile in many ways and is entirely helpless." This mysterious, troubled, helpless son died shortly after Wiseman wrote of him. His parents apparently believed him to have been damaged by what Pheobe went through in those troubled months.

Wiseman was finally forced to take Pheobe and the child back to their native West Virginia for a year so she could recover her health and balance. He went $600 into debt to do so. Finally he, Pheobe, and their son returned to the clearing on Brookie Bottom. She regained her health and had another child, a daughter. But while Pheobe had broken under grief and finally recovered, Henson Wiseman had given himself to hate and was starting to become a legend.

IN CEDAR COUNTY it is still maintained that Henson Wiseman changed forever on the day he rode up to his cabin and saw his children's blood staining the floors. He swore vengeance upon the whole Indian race. Ever after, he carried a rifle with him, and he carried a Colt pistol—in his own words, "five years, night and day." He wrote that "during the day I spent the time working for my bread, and at night examining the country for miles around to be sure that no Indian would be in waiting at dawn of day, as I knew their intentions were to kill me. I employed a young man for one year to act as scout for me, at $25 per month."

Wiseman, it was said, always carried his rifle with him, "ready at the sight of an Indian to level the loaded rifle and fire." An old Nebraska history book gives this chilling description of him—that after he learned of his children's deaths, he was crazed by the event and "shot Indians on sight thereafter, always leaving their bodies in attitudes of prayer." Two extant photographs show him as an old man, craggy of face, gun in hand, but how many Indians he killed is not at all certain. Two witnesses told of seeing Wiseman pick off Indians as they canoed down the Missouri. One of the witnesses was a victim himself, an Indian Wiseman had wounded. The other was Joachim Will. According to F. C. Radke of Tecumseh, Nebraska, Will "stood with old Wiseman on the Missouri bluffs when a canoe with two Indians came downstream. Wiseman waited till they came within range. He raised his gun, his old army musket, and fired. One Indian fell into the bottom of the canoe, the other paddled frantically. The gun sounded again. The canoe overturned, and floated empty down the river."

Radke added that "many an Indian canoe floated down the Missouri with its passenger missing. . . . a shot rang out of the woods when peaceful bands were passing and the shots never missed."

The Indians knew of Wiseman's hate and tried to give him a wide berth. The only shooting Wiseman himself ever admitted to was that of the wounded Indian who said Wiseman had been his attacker. Yet Wiseman's silence may not have been as innocent as it seems, for this kind of vigilante justice was forbidden and, supposedly, had Wiseman admitted to committing such deeds he would have been prosecuted for murder. One thing is certain, however—if Wiseman did indeed carry out his vendetta against the Indian nation, it is unlikely, as long as he himself did not admit it and no white man accused him, that the community would have raised much objection.

Mrs. Pearl Guy, a granddaughter of the Wisemans, said in 1963 that she remembered her grandfather and that she thought the "revenge stories" were "far-fetched." But Judge Radke and others persisted in maintaining the truth of the embittered man's obsession. "Whenever he heard that there were Indians in the vicinity he watched for them constantly."

No one was ever sure which individuals or which tribe were responsible for the deaths of the Wiseman children. Wiseman himself maintained it was the Yankton and Santee Sioux, but the only concrete evidence concerning the deaths was the confession of the two Indians who, captured by the army, said that they had



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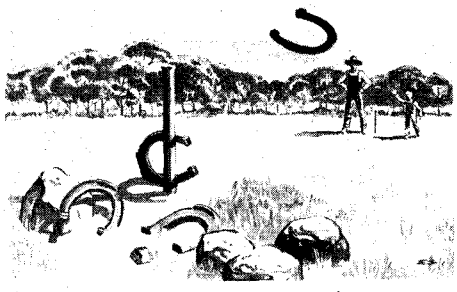

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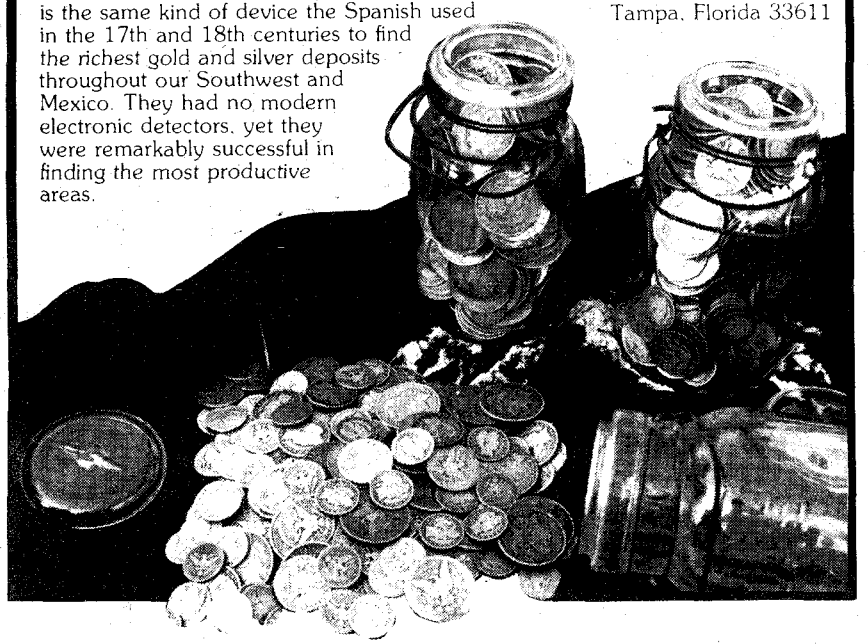


killed a family in northeast Nebraska. The Indians were executed, but no record seems to exist of their names or tribes.

Addison Sheldon, former secretary of the Nebraska Historical Society, was particularly disturbed by this aspect of the Wiseman legend:

"Cedar County citizens have told me that Henson Wiseman carried his rifle with him through the years; that he was always ready at the sight of an Indian to level the loaded rifle and fire. I am not sure how absolutely true this tradition may be . . . yet one can understand the bitterness that ate into Henson Wiseman's heart. And it was not confined to Indians. Wiseman never forgave the government for failing to protect his family when his family was all the more vulnerable because he himself had volunteered to leave home to protect the frontier."

AT THE AGE of seventy-seven, Wiseman still brooded on the events which had changed his life. "If I had known the Government [was] . . . , of savage warfare so ignorant, I would have sent my family away when I left," he wrote.

Smouldering with anger and sorrow, he asked the government for damages. His claims were not exorbitant, nor were they intended to make up for the loss of his children. He simply wanted reimbursement for his stolen goods and for the expenses he incurred in taking Pheobe back east. His case was convincing, for he had ridden away from his family, certain that the military would offer them protection.

He sent a bill to the United States Congress, with a petition signed on his behalf by two state governors and a territorial governor. He was supported by a Nebraska senator and a number of citizens. He fought for over two decades to have his claim honored, and died finally at ninety-four, his efforts in vain. His only harvest was bitterness—with one exception. The government decided not to brand him as a deserter when he rode away that August day to find out what had become of his family. He was given a belated honorable discharge. That was all. That, and the legend.

At seventy-seven Wiseman wrote "Now to a candid world. If I should treat one of my neighbors as I have been treated by the government, I would have been put out of sight long ago. . . . My family was buried in blood, dirt and rags, like so many dogs, their mother not able to see them to their resting place. I received an honorable discharge from the army, but not from dread of duty. Those Indians stole from me; for four years after all this, I was on my guard and was shot at. I wore a Colts revolver for five years night and day. . . ."

Pheobe lived to be eighty and, when she died, was buried beside her children, whose bodies had been moved to the St. James cemetery. Henson Wiseman died in 1912, and was laid beside them.

St. James itself is gone now. The log cabin is gone too, and the clearing where Wiseman lived, where his children died, where Pheobe, in after years, cried out in terrified dreams, and where Henson himself carried his two guns and hated



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the Indian nation and the U. S. government. This clearing is accessible still by a neglected road. A rusting fence surrounds a monument, raised in 1927, which announces to the wilderness that five Wiseman children died on this spot. If you stand there quietly, it seems you can almost hear the woods inching closer, feel the oaks and basswood closing in tighter, almost feel the coldness of the violence that was such a part of the frontier.

In the neighboring hills—those tall, old, green, unexpected hills of northeastern Nebraska—lie the bones of the Indians who lived there before the Wisemans, perhaps of those Indians who murdered them. The summer rains wash bones out of the ground on hilltops, and farmers still find arrow heads when they turn the furrows.

St. James and Wynot were the outposts to the Dakotas. The land is not, in general, good for farming or grazing. Many a settler's grave lies in clearings like the Wiseman's, clearings growing over, going back to the wilderness. Even in the cemeteries, the stones tilt, the weeds flourish, graves sink. And here, on the edge of the Pa Sapa, the sacred land of the Sioux, and the fringe of the Indian Wars, nature seems determined to reclaim the land, and to erace the traces of what transpired among these hills. The coyotes howl here; the deer are coming back. And the bones of the Wiseman children, like the bones of the dead Sioux, are going back to the dust that inflamed them all to battle and to bloodshed. Just the story of that complex and lonely soldier, Henson Wiseman, lives on.

## Wild Old Days

*(Continued from page 21)*

complained of having their rest disturbed by unearthly moans and sounds of footsteps which apparently came from within the heavy log walls of the way station.

A story was told of an old stagecoach driver called Big Bill Mullins who had no patience with such foolishness as hauntings or "the dad-blamed idiots" who believed in such stuff. It was pure and unadulterated nonsense, he declared, to think that any self-respecting ghost would haunt a crude old log way station out on the edge of nowhere when there were so many fine town houses elsewhere that they could haunt in style.

**An early-day Montana way station.**

He offered to spend five days and nights in the upstairs room best known for its ghostly noises to prove to superstitious people that there just weren't any such things as ghosts, and while he was there he figured to do a little treasure hunting as well.

True to his word, Big Bill moved into Eight Mile House all prepared to spend five lonely days and nights to prove his point. Several of his friends were stationed outside the building to see that he didn't fudge on the deal.

In the middle of the third night, Big Bill tore out of the house with his bedding which he calmly spread on the ground for a bed. Before he dozed off, he told his friends that he still didn't believe in ghosts, but whatever was making that all-fired racket in there should have principle enough to shut up awhile and let "a body get a little sleep." He declined to elaborate further on this statement, but he never offered to prove his point about ghosts again, either.

Whether or not the ghosts of Eight Mile House finally put in their required shifts and retired from haunting it is hard to say, but it was reported that after holding open house for ghosts for several years the building suddenly settled down and became just an ordinary old house with only the natural and explainable creakings old houses are entitled to.

Although the stories of haunting died down, the lost treasure stories did not. The Eight Mile House was examined many times both inside and out and many holes were dug in the ground nearby. But if anyone was ever lucky enough to find the treasure, he was also wise enough to keep still about it.

—From *Treasure State Treasure Tales* by Jean M. Moore by permission.

## Frying Pan Charlie

*(Continued from page 43)*

pool hall frequented by Pan. Through Gherna's efforts all the necessary funds were raised, and Charles Alzamora was laid to rest by his many acquaintances of former days.

Today an oil portrait of Frying Pan Charlie hangs on one of the walls in the Arizona Historical Society in Tucson. After his death there were those who thought that his picture should be placed in the collection despite the fact that he never really did anything worthwhile so far as Tucson was concerned. It was just that he was such a well-known character so closely connected with so much of early Tucson history.

The picture depicts a man with a generous nose, and walrus-type mustache. His hat is slightly cocked, as are his eyes. His clothing is nondescript.

Charles Alzamora, Frying Pan Charlie, rests in Row H, unmarked grave 5, of Holy Hope Cemetery, surrounded by many other unmarked, but recorded, graves of early Tucson settlers. He is in good company.

If a marker were ever to be erected over his grave the epitaph would undoubtedly read:

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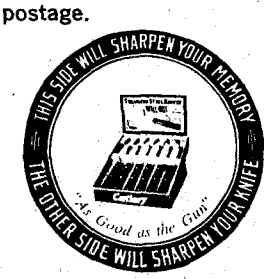


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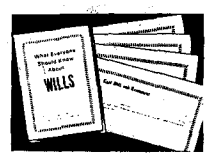


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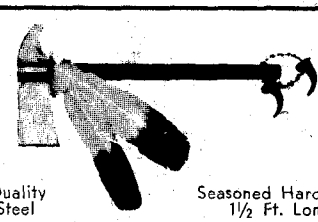

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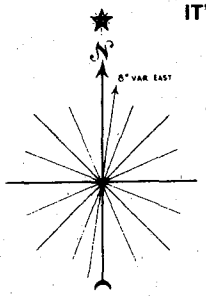

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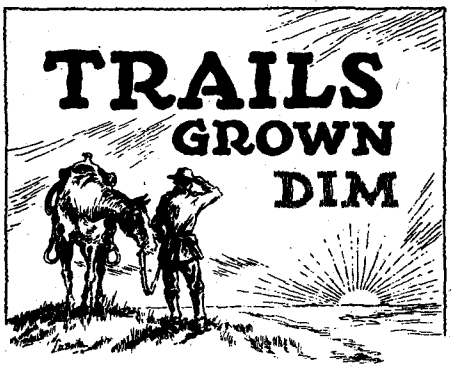


**Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient! If possible, please type your query; or if handwritten, print or write clearly, especially names, dates, and places—and most of all, please be brief. In accord with the content of our magazines and purpose of this service since its beginning, preference is given writers whose trails have grown dim out West: lost ancestors and relatives who were sheriffs, pioneers, Forty-niners, muleskinners, cowboys, Indians and Indian fighters, and so on. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters as soon as we can. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to below is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write to us.**

### Huggins-Clampitt

I would like to hear from any relatives or friends of my grandfather, George Washington Huggins. He had several brothers and sisters as well as two daughters by an Indian wife in Oklahoma. I don't know them or any of their names. He lived many years in Quitaque, Texas and is buried there. At one time he was a deputy marshal in Texas.

I would also like to hear from anyone knowing of any of the descendants of Lymon Jackson Clampitt. He last lived near Ponca City, Oklahoma, having settled there when it was still Indian Territory. I believe some of his family were listed on the Indian rolls in Oklahoma.—Mrs. F. W. Martin, Route 1, Box 38, Hatfield, Arkansas 71945

### O'Leary

I would like information on any relative or ancestors of my father, George Daniel O'Leary, born in San Francisco, California in 1913. I believe his mother's maiden name was Hazel Ohlson. All letters answered gratefully.—Maureen Neyens, 525 N. Locust, Prineville, Oregon 97754

### Madden-Cargill-Bennett

I would appreciate any information on my Great-grandfather Robert Madden's family. He was born in 1812 in Laurens County, South Carolina. He went to Claiborne Parish, Louisiana. He married Nancy (maiden name unknown), born in 1817 in Tennessee or North Carolina. They lived in Houston and Anderson Counties, Texas (Ioni Community). They survived the Madden-Edens Massacre about 1838 in Houston County, Texas. Parents were William Madden and Sarah Cargill. He moved from South Carolina to Louisiana where he died. His widow and girls came to Anderson County, Texas by 1850. Nancy was married again to Stephen Bennett.—Mrs. Roy Hotz, Route 1, Box 362, San Marcos, Texas 78666

### Hartstein

I am trying to locate some kinfolks. My father's name was David Hartstein, born January 24, 1901. His parents' names are unknown, but they came from Germany. He had a brother (first name unknown) who was supposed to have lived in Washington, D. C. My father lived most of his life in Houston, Texas. He had a sister, who married a Ficklestein and was in a nursing home in Houston. Any information will help.—Helen Whisenhunt, Route 2, Box 299D, Grand Prairie, Texas 75050

### Wharton

I would like to contact descendants of Clarence Wharton, Texas historian and Houston lawyer. What was the relationship of F. E. (or Effie) and Mame Clarke to Adele Wharton, wife of Clarence? Was Quinetta a Clarke, Morgan or McGann?—Jane B. Westfall, Star Route, Box 255, Raymond, California 93653

### Moran

I would appreciate any information on Mary Moran. She was my great-grandmother, born about 1870 in Indian Territory. She was Cheyenne and part Irish. On January 24, 1901 she married John Washee. Mary's mother's Indian name was Bear Woman. I would like information on her father whose last name was Moran.—Ronnie Enriquez, 1608 S. W. 22nd Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73108

### Williams

James Williams married Elizabeth Sawyers in Caswell County, North Carolina, June 18, 1806. I would like the names of their parents, as well as names of their children and would also like to correspond with a descendant of this James and Elizabeth Williams. I will answer all letters.—J. E. Williams, Box 1045, Brady, Texas 76825

### Hulsey

I am seeking information about my maternal great-grandfather, James Hulsey. He was born in 1840, died in 1901 and is buried at Hartshorne, Oklahoma. I believe he was city marshal, or sheriff, at Fort Smith, Arkansas about 1885-1890. Any information will be greatly appreciated and I will gladly exchange any information that I have.—Gary O. Wilburn, Drawer H, Ruston, Louisiana 71270.

### Colvin

James Colvin was born in 1794-95 in Kentucky. By 1840 he was in Harrison County, Indiana. He is listed in the 1850 census with family. His wife died between 1840 and 1850. He was gone by 1860. I need the name of his wife and information as to the death of James or his whereabouts between 1850-60. No record has been found in Indiana of his selling property, or of his death. I believe his son's name was Montgomery.—Mrs. F. A. Rowden, 1222 Park Avenue, La Junta, Colorado 81050



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## Great Falls' First Black Cowboy

*(Continued from page 29)*

cow camps. Six, eight, and sometimes ten or twelve horses would be required for one outfit, and these, too, came from the wild herds.

"Every man that is a good rider isn't a good horse-breaker," Walter explained. "It takes a certain kind of know-how. When you break a horse, you break him so anyone can ride him. If he bucks, you want to ride it out of him. Even horses that are broke lose their head sometimes and start bucking. Then you usually have to break them again."

From the time Walter was old enough to handle a horse, until he left Montana in 1913, he broke range mustangs into usable cattle ponies and freight teams. Pay for breaking a horse to ride was usually $10. It took longer to convince a wild horse that he should submit to a harness and then pull a wagon along with several other horses; to break a horse for freighting, the charge was $30. Sometimes ranchers would ask Walter to break a horse for packing or for roping and that, too, required more time and brought in a little more money.

Each spring the ranchers found that some of their saddle horses had left the winter pasture and gone back to the wild bunch. Walter often earned $5 per head as he and another cowhand retrieved them. To do this they built a blind corral—one completely camouflaged by upright pine trees cut and leaned against the fence. Knowing that wild horses, when pursued, naturally head for the forested ridges, the men were able to herd them into the pine-tree corral.

Domestic horses reacted calmly to the corral, but the wild ones turned and fought to get out. Some grabbed at the pine poles and left their teeth-marks. It was Walter's job to open the gate for the frantic mustangs, manage to keep out of the way of flying hoofs, and to close the gate after them so that the once-tamed animals could be roped in the corral and led back to the ranch.

In Montana the early years of the cattle industry were harsh ones. Walter Jackson recalls the people and incidents that made history, because he was living it too. "While I was working in the Smith River Country [south of Great Falls], I left White Sulphur Springs one winter afternoon heading for Three Forks. I was following the Old Dorsey Trail along the foothills of the Flatiron Mountains. The Moss Agate River was on the east side.

"A ground blizzard came up when I was about half-way to Dorsey. I had planned to stay at the Big Madison Ranch for the night, but I completely lost my bearings and didn't know where I was. My horse was floundering in the snowdrifts with my weight on him, so I got off. I took my twelve-foot rope and made two half-hitches about the saddle horn and then held onto the other end. The horse could then work his way through the drifts, and as I tightened the rope at intervals he would pull me through, too.

"Finally the horse found the ranch gate, and as I opened it a bell rang. The cowboys from the Big Madison Ranch came running and asked how I had gotten there at that time of day. I told them I had been on the trail all night. They took my horse to the barn and me to the house, but they wouldn't let me near the stove until they had examined my feet and hands to be sure I wasn't frozen. They told me it was 48 degrees below zero, but I was O.K.

"Old Dorsey," Mr. Jackson continued, "was the great shipping point for the stockmen out of Smith River Valley. Cattle came in from all over this country. There was a flat-bottomed draw just outside of Old Dorsey at the foot of the ridge. There were tents, teepees, freight wagons, and round-up wagons until it looked like a village. During shipping time as many as a hundred people were camped there.

"A lot of cowboys came into Dorsey. Some of them would stop at the little hotel, and one night I remember that a character named Bill Murray was sitting on the benches in the lobby.

"The big wood-burning stove that heated the lobby had an iron shaker to use when the fire needed stirring up. On this particular evening, the room was cooling off, so the hotel owner said, 'Say, Bill, will you shake down the stove? It's getting cold in here.' Bill never smiled, and he didn't answer, but he got up and you could see his white teeth through a big black mustache. He stepped back, so that he was about ten feet from the stove. Then he took out his .45 and shot into the stove until he emptied his gun. That shook down the fire and cleared all the cowboys off the benches."

WALTER laughed as he told me, "Another character was Joe Clyde. He drove the stage from White Sulphur to Three Forks. Joe was the dare-devil type and before settling down to stage driving, he had been rawhidin' with several cowboys in the Townsend area. He once saw a bear and roped it. Later Charlie Russell painted a picture of this event.

"I knew Charlie Russell from the time I was a boy until I left Montana. He was around Great Falls then, guiding hunters. He had been a nighthawk and then a wrangler for a cattle pool. He painted a picture called 'The Trappers Last Stand.'

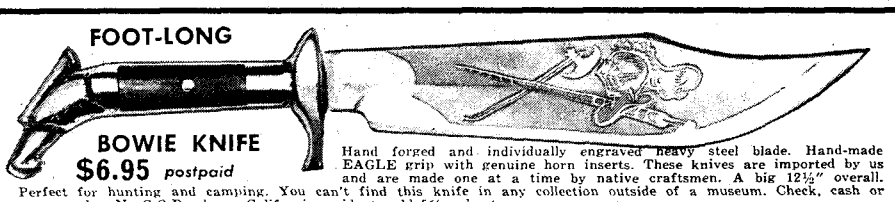
"He told me about the last time the trappers came out of the mountains in the spring with their furs. The Indians were waiting at the foothills of the main range of the Rockies. When the trappers came near, the Indians opened fire on them. The trappers lay behind their horses to shoot back, and Charlie said he thought it would make a good picture.

"It did, too, and that picture hung in the Conrad Bank on Central Avenue in Great Falls until some New Yorkers came and bought it.

"Then there was Harry Williams. He was a government trapper and wolfer. Now, a lot of people thought wolfers were lowdown," commented Walter, "but Harry was the head of the trappers from the Mexican border to Canada, and he was a smart man. He hired and fired trappers and wolfers, and had the reputation of being the best game-shot with a rifle that the West knew of then.

"He is the one that killed the Custer wolf. That Custer wolf was thought to be the greatest stock-killer in the West. He ranged around the Custer Battlefield and on into Dakota. Harry had sent some of his best wolfers to get him, but for four years the animal had out-foxed them. The stockmen appealed to the government to do something about this killer wolf. So the officials wrote to


FOOT-LONG



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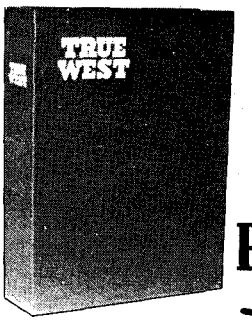


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Harry and told him to go to Custer Battlefield, himself, and to stay on the trail until he got that wolf. Harry Williams never lost a wolf trail once he found it. Cowboys used to say that he could track by scent.

"Harry got his saddlehorse and two packhorses and loaded up his bedding, plenty of grub, and some cooking utensils. He picked up the Custer wolf trail around the Battlefield, and he stayed on that trail for six months. He followed that wolf down into the Dakotas and all around the Black Hills and back to the Battlefield again. Harry made three of those round-trips trailing that wolf and finally on the fourth trip, about half-way between Wyoming and the Dakotas, he spied the wolf, and the wolf saw him at about the same time. Being a quick shot, and a dead shot at that, Harry dropped the animal at a 500-yard range. He said later that it was a miracle he had gotten the animal, because if he had missed him that time, he doubted he would ever have gotten another shot at him."

IN 1913 Walter drifted over into Wyoming country and got a job working horses for the Lazy B outfit near Gillette. He knew Tom Tate, Buck Taylor, and Tom Wilson who had been Buffalo Bill cowboys, and Bunk Hanes, another black cowhand who had come up from Texas with the T Bar 7 outfit.

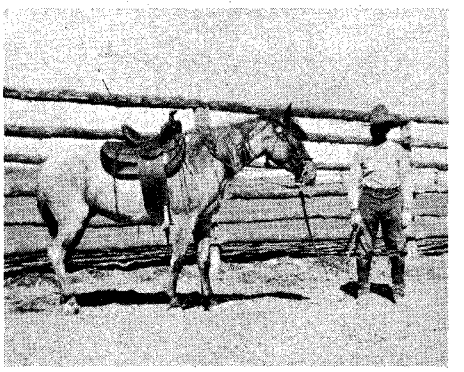
"There weren't many colored people around Wyoming, but I got acquainted with the chef of one of the Burlington trains and his wife who ran an eating house in Gillette. Later she gave me the name and address of her sister in New Jersey, and I corresponded with her for about a year. All that time the other cowboys were daring me to go back East and meet this girl. Finally in 1916 I dressed up in my best cowboy boots and Stetson hat and took the train for New Jersey.

"I was scared. I had never been farther east than Wyoming and the thought of meeting those Easterners was a lot more scary than breaking wild horses."

Walter was quite a novelty there. People had romantic ideas about the Wild West, and no one had ever seen a genuine cowboy. "Well, I had to make up my mind in a hurry," chuckled Mr. Jackson, "because I had to get back to Wyoming in time for the fall round-up." He smiled wistfully, "So, I did it. I asked Helen to marry me and she accepted. We didn't have time to fall in love before we were married, but we did that afterwards and had many happy years together. We didn't have any children of our own, but we raised four of Helen's nephews after her sister died in Chicago.

"For six years we lived on Wyoming ranches where I worked as a cowboy, but she was a city girl and never really liked ranch life. In 1922 we moved to Sheridan, and I worked for the railroad until I retired."

The congregation of the Methodist Church, where Helen sang spirituals on Sundays and Walter served as Chief Usher, gathered for a a big celebration to



**Walter Jackson and his horse.**

honor him on his eighty-fifth birthday in October 1972. Only Helen was missing; she had died a few years before.

"I want to tell you about one more character I knew in Montana," Walter said as we were about to conclude one of our conversations. "That was Lil, the stagedriver. She was a Negro girl, had come to Montana from Kansas in a covered wagon with the white family that had raised her. She was about eleven or twelve then, and the family homesteaded between Great Falls and Cascade. She grew up to be a good ranch hand, 'specially good at handling horses.

"In later years, she got a job driving stage from Cascade to Judith Gap. She could handle a four- or six-horse team as good as any man. The cowboys respected her and would help her hook up at the different stage stations. Everyone respected her. Lil wore a big white hat turned up on the side, and a soft leather riding skirt and cowboy boots. She had a .45 strapped on her hip. With that .45 she could knock the head off a jackrabbit at fifty yards. She never smoked a cigarette or took a drink. She carried that .45 and a sawed-off shotgun on every trip, and in all the years she drove she was never held up.

"Great people I knew in Montana in those early days," Walter concluded, and I thought to myself that there were so many unsung heroes like Walter Jackson who had contributed to the building of the West—who had lived its exciting history—whose story should be written down. He, and others like him, who took the wild mustangs from the mountains and tamed them so that the cattle industry could operate, played on important role in shaping our country.

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## Ticket Scalpin'

*(Continued from page 27)*

able pick-pockets and loafers . . . ."

Passengers had to carry their own food and blankets, but for $2.50 could buy two boards and a calico sack filled with sawdust. By placing the two boards across the facing wooden benches which served as seats, a crude bed could be made. But sleep didn't come easy anyway on a train filled with newcomers from strange countries, Indians, ranchers and salesmen. For further distraction, there was usually a pair of three-card monte gamblers fleecing some greenhorns in a corner of the coach.

Just when the first railroad ticket "scalping" originated isn't known, but one of the earliest accounts of this activity was written by Joseph Anderson in his memoirs. In the 1870s, railroad fares fluctuated greatly from month to month. Prior to the Interstate Commerce Commission and other restraints, railroads charged all they could get both in freight and passenger fares. The average cost, both Pullman and lowest class, for a through ticket from Omaha to San Francisco in 1875 was about $45. If you got off the train anywhere west of Ogden, Utah you paid the total fare; there was no reduction in cost if you didn't go through to San Francisco. This loophole in company policy was quickly spotted by the scalpers in the West, as had been done earlier on the eastern railroads. Anderson doesn't say just where he learned of ticket scalping, but he gives a good account of how the business operated in 1875.

"The ticket was good for ten days," he wrote, "and it generally took about seven or eight days to make the trip from Omaha to San Francisco, so a good many people going to Idaho and the mining camps in Nevada would have through tickets. They would sell them to anyone for what they could get and sometimes give them away. . . .

"I got off the train at Reno, Nevada and met my brother Charlie there. [We] concluded we would try our hand at scalping emigrant railroad tickets that were good for San Francisco. There were a good many people going to Virginia City, Nevada, that came by emigrant train and they all had through tickets to San Francisco. The way we worked it, I would get on the train at Wadsworth, the first station east of Reno. I would find out who was getting off at Reno and offer them a dollar for their ticket which would be no good to them when they got off the train. I would usually get about five tickets [per trip]. Meanwhile, in Reno, my brother would find out who was going to San Francisco. The regular fare from Reno to San Francisco was $17.75 and Charlie would promise them he could get the tickets for one half what the regular fare was. We were cleaning up about $35 per day when we could get the tickets and the people to buy them."

Although Anderson's activity certainly bordered on the fringes of legality, ticket scalping was not illegal in most cases, and neither the buyer nor the seller was breaking the law. The railroads, of course, frowned on such activity, but there was little that could be done.

An early Supreme Court case on the subject was *Sleeper vs. Pennsylvania R. R. Company* in 1882. Sleeper had bought a ticket from a scalper and the railroad had prosecuted. Pennsylvania, it seems, had a state statute making it a misdemeanor to purchase a train ticket from anyone other than an authorized agent. This was the railroad's case, but the plaintiff countered that he was entitled to all the privileges of a regular train passenger, these being printed on the face of the ticket. The railroad lost when it was ruled that since the ticket was bought in New York, and no limita-



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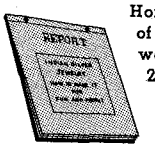

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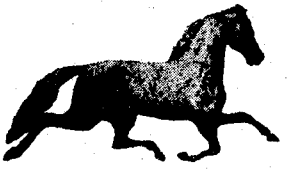

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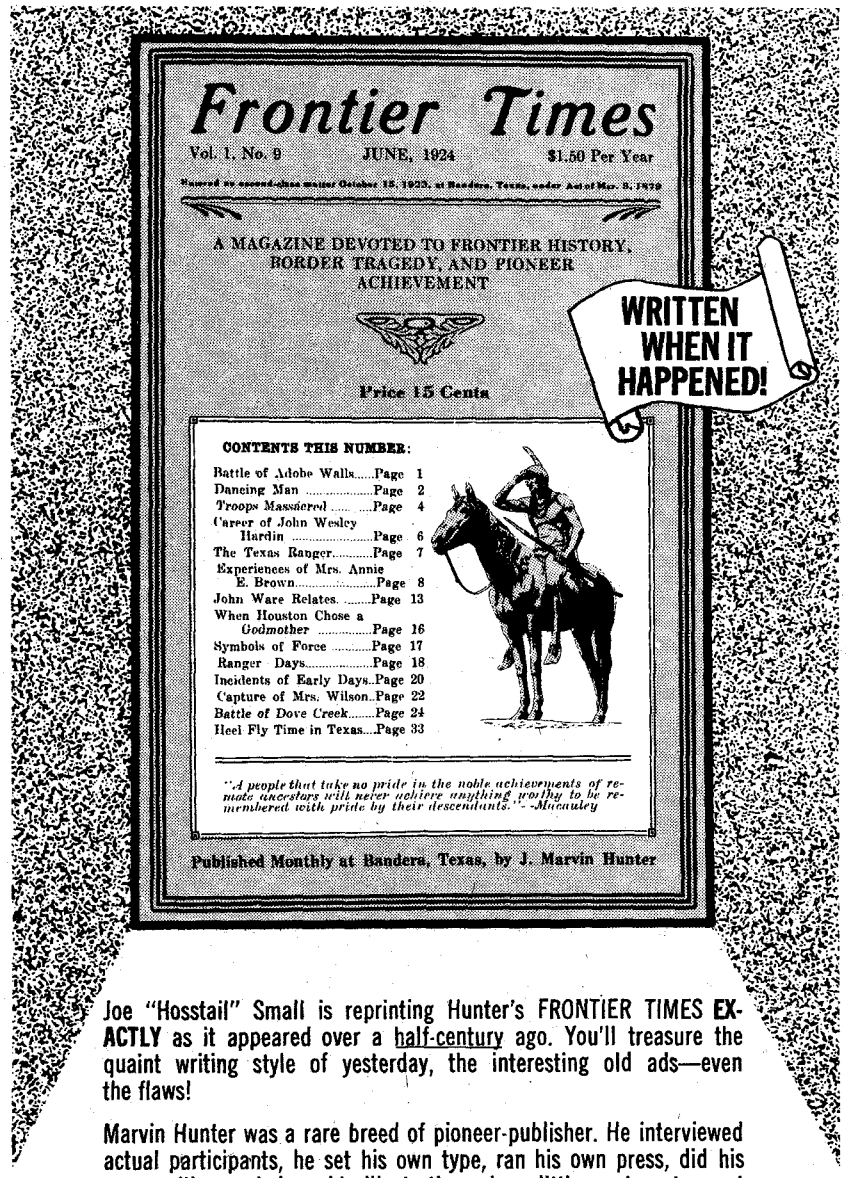
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tions as to who could use the ticket were printed on it, the fare had at one time been paid and the railroad company must honor the bearer of the ticket without inquiring into how he had acquired it. It was a setback for the railways, but the case probably wouldn't have stopped the scalpers however it had been ruled.

AS EARLY as 1877 Simon Steiner had established a scalping business in St. Louis. By the 1890s trade in railway tickets had reached the stage where scalpers were being referred to as "brokers." These professionals had offices located close to the local railway depots, and some 560 firms were listed as conducting this business. In 1896 alone, scalpers took in $47 million.

By then the ticket trade had acquired a sophistication which was almost admirable in its variety of services. Besides the regular scalping procedures of several persons using a through ticket, thousand-mile tickets which were sold by many railroads were used in much the same way. Monthly season tickets and other fares at reduced rates were bought and sold by the scalpers, as well as advertising tickets which were used by the railroad as passes and often as payment for newspaper ads, printing and other services.

During rate wars between rival railroads, brokers would buy up large quantities of tickets and hold them until the tickets had gone back to their normal price. They were then sold to the public at lower than regular cost, but still at a profit for the scalper.

Finally, to compete with the brokers, the railroads had their own agents who solicited buyers in competition with scalpers and realized a profit in the same way!

The scalpers or brokers provided a convenience which a growing and traveling young nation appreciated. There was quick service, no standing in line, and travel arrangements could be made in advance. With railroad lines spreading all over the country—railroads that for the most part set their own rates and made their own rules—the advent of the ticket brokers was really to be expected.

A German traveler in this country during the late 1890s made a point of looking into the scalping business and wrote an interesting article for one of the railroad journals. "At San Francisco," reported G. Frank, "I bought a ticket from a dealer (not of course to save money, for I had a pass, but in order to learn something) to travel to Pueblo, Colorado —the fare is $45—; I got for $52.50 a through ticket for Kansas City, a greater distance (fare: $50.00) and I got besides a guarantee for the return of $12.50 from a broker in Pueblo. I therefore gained $5.00. The ticket was non-transferable, available for six days, and consisted of several coupons and allowed the journey to be broken at the points for which each coupon was available. The envelope in which the coupons were enclosed bore in thick letters the inscription: 'Not to be shown on the train.'

"In talking to the broker, I purposely



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spoke of my free pass, available over a competing line, to test whether he traded in passes, because then he would have doubtless offered to purchase mine; but he said nothing at all. The ticket for Kansas City, which he had not in his shop, was moreover bought from the regular office opposite. It seems to me that if the railway company really wanted to abolish the traffic in tickets, it ought not to sell any to the clerk of a firm opposite whose staff it could easily recognize.

"On my arrival in Pueblo, I handed the unused portion of my ticket to a dealer who was not the one whose name was on my credit note and in this way I proved his terms to be the same as those of the San Francisco dealer."

THESE railroad ticket brokers and the traveling passenger agents were the forerunners of today's travel agency. The passenger agents toured the country, trying to persuade local ticket sellers to route people on his line (it was said that the ability to hold one's liquor was a prime requisite for the job).

The opportunities for criminals in the brokerage business were obvious, and counterfeiters made an early appearance. H. A. Koach, a Pinkerton operative, founded the Railroad Ticket Protective Bureau which was instrumental in detecting and preventing illegal ticket activity. Koach broke up a most active group of criminal brokers in Denver, Colorado in 1904. He had been called in by the officials of the Denver and Rio Grande and the Burlington Railroads in May when a large volume of bad tickets was suddenly noticed. Counterfeit tickets, tickets with altered printing, and re-plugged tickets indicated a well organized gang was at work. An investigation was launched which quickly identified various methods of the operation.

Tickets were being purchased from Denver to Silverton by way of Durango. These tickets were then sold to people whose destination was between these two points, and upon arrival they turned the tickets in to a local broker for a rebate. The tickets were then returned to Denver where they were re-plugged and used again. This was kept up until the ticket was in tatters from use.

Another scheme involved buying a ticket from Denver to the small town of Brush, just a few miles outside the city. Dipped in an acid bath, the word "Brush" disappeared, since it was printed in a different type of ink from the rest of the ticket. "Chicago" and other destinations were then printed on the ticket, and a series of nice, tidy profits were to be made. Again, these tickets were used and re-used until they literally fell apart.

Koach, assisted by the Arapahoe County Sheriff's office, closed in on the gang in July 1904. The offices of Sissions and Hatch, the suspected brokers, were raided in Denver and a variety of incriminating evidence was discovered. Bleaching acids, inks of different shades and consistencies, plugged tickets, and numbering machines and printing devices were uncovered, along with a pot of starch. When a ticket had been re-plugged, bleached and reprinted or altered in any way, it was starched, ironed and made stiff and new again.

Proposed anti-scalping legislation prompted hearings before the U. S. Senate's Interstate Commerce Committee in 1897. Testifying for the American Ticket Brokers' Association was one George M. McKenzie who had been president of that group in 1881. McKenzie gave a long and rambling defense of his business and dodged the Committee's questions like a seasoned politician. One of his statements was that 95% of the brokerage business was done in cooperation with the railroads. This comment brought a barrage of telegrams from railroads all over the country denying McKenzie's charge. It was quickly brought to the Committee's attention also that McKenzie had been indicted for scalping activities in 1879 and 1892.

Although he fought back with an array of excuses, McKenzie was permanently demolished by the testimony of Paul Morton, a vice-president of the Santa Fe Railroad. Morton told the committee that a detective of his line had recently purchased an advertising railway ticket from McKenzie's Chicago-based firm. The ticket bore the name of one "John Lovell" and when the detective asked how he could indentify himself without lying, the agent replied that this was no problem. He then produced two stamped and cancelled envelopes and erased the names from them. Writing "John Lovell" on each envelope, the agent gave them to the detective with the advice that if the conductor asked any questions, he could just produce the envelopes for identification. McKenzie's credibility, and that of his organization, took a nose dive at this point. Counterfeiting and McKenzie-type operations gave legitimate ticket brokers a bad name, and gradually this business was abandoned. Scalping activities, however, continued through World War II. Then suddenly the great days of railroading—and, with them, ticket scalping—were gone, gone like the Old West which they had nurtured and watched grow to maturity. As a nation we turned to the highways and the sky; and a new breed of men, gathered on the sidelines, continues to "buck the system" with more or less success.

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### The Benevolent Ghost

*(Continued from page 39)*

Zollicoffer and Albert Pike, would become Confederate generals. These men had been fair with him so he bore them no grudge. As editor of the Cincinnati *Gazette*, he was made very sad when a reporter brought the news that General Zollicoffer had been killed in the battle at Mill Spring. Alonzo wept. Next day he was horrified when his rival, the Cincinnati *Commercial*, gloated over the fall of Zollicoffer and seemed to condone the abuse that soldiers had inflicted on the body. Of the opposing editor, Alonzo Hine would mutter, "The man has a hernia in his soul."

But he had some good days—posterity-wise, at least. In 1853, he helped twenty-seven other men organize The Literary Club of Cincinnati. Among the charter


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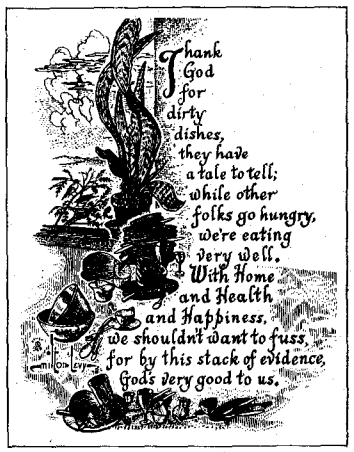


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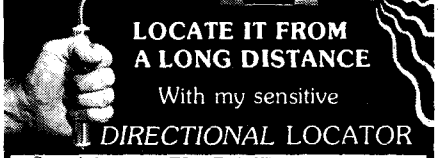

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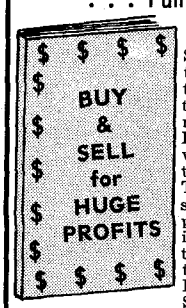


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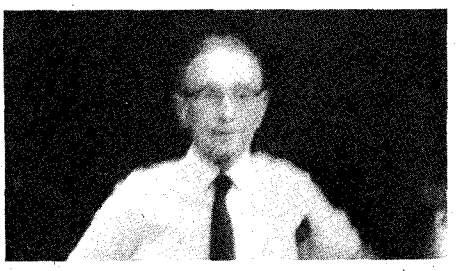
members was Rutherford B. Hayes. James A. Garfield and William Howard Taft would join them later. It also enabled Alonzo to share a lecture platform with Ralph Waldo Emerson. When he recorded Lincoln's address at Gettysburg, he recorded it verbatim. Luckily for him, he commented on the talk *favorably*—something many other editors wished later that they had done.

After Alonzo became the first editor of the Cincinnati *Enquirer*, he was fired for writing an editorial advocating a ten-hour working day rather then the twelve hours then in vogue. Years later, when he died in 1906, the *Enquirer* had relented; they ran his picture on the front page. "L. A. Hine—Prophet With Honor" was the caption under the picture.

WHEN Lucius Hine began treating the sick in Burnet County, Texas he had one temporary handicap—he was a Yankee. He resisted the mild resentment with good nature, mostly by voting independent among a nest of Democrats. And as for the young ladies, the war was over. Nancy Gillum said, "I am going to marry him." Being both truthful and Irish, Nancy achieved her goal.

They raised a family of three girls and two boys—Julia (my mother), Celia Opal, Ward and Luke. When Julia married Jesse Bell in 1912, the events of the following year gave Dr. Hine "one exciting night." He attended Julia when she gave birth to a baby boy. "My stars—there's another one!" was the way he let it be known that he had never delivered twins before. The Bell twins, Marvin and I, grew fast. At the age of two we "toddled" out to the store that Dad ran, so he moved us two miles out in the country. At the age of four, we closed this gap by "running" to *downtown* Oakalla. My Grandpa Hine said, "Those boys run like a pair of mules; their mother will never catch them." He and my father were great friends except on the one subject of immunization. "No needles for my boys" was the Jesse Bell



**Jack Gillum in 1973 at the age of eighty. He served as tax collector at Georgetown, Texas for 42 years. Dr. Hine amputated his leg when Gillum was nine years old, following a nearly fatal rattlesnake bite.**

ruling. (The U. S. Army later took care of this parental dogma.) Our sisters, Katherine and Oma, were younger and had to "enjoy" the progress of medical science with shots for about everything.

Dr. Hine was very happy when most of his exposed patients accepted inoculation during a typhoid epidemic of 1917. In earlier days he had noted that it took more courage to eat a fly-covered cake in a home with typhoid than to face an armed robber, and he had done both.

In 1918, my brother Marvin gained some local fame (or notoriety) by being pronounced missing in the Lampasas River. The ladies nearby who were picking grapes soon changed the word "missing" to "drowned." Many people turned out to aid in the search. When Dad and Dr. Hine arrived, they found Marvin asleep in a car. "Are you the one that drowned?" was the question put to him for many years. (Contrast my claim to fame—or notoriety; I got bawled out in 1924 by Jim Ferguson when he was promoting his wife for the governorship of Texas in a speech at Copperas Cove. I was seated on a box behind him while he was making a whooping plea for "Ma." I noticed a thread hanging down from his coat and got the idea I should gently remove it. With my goal almost accomplished, Jim threw both arms around me and shouted, "Quit that, you little devil!")

THERE WAS real tragedy, however, in connection with the day of the grape gathering. Aunt Celia's three-year-old son, Norman Kendrick, ate some of the grapes the women had put in a tub. He swallowed some seeds which apparently afflicted his stomach. Dr. Hine could not save his grandson from this peculiar illness. The town was a sea of sadness when the boy was laid to rest in the Gillum Cemetery.

More was to come. Dr. Hine had been covering too much territory and was wearing out. He would often come to our house on the hill where the breezes were strong, thereby making breathing a little easier for him. He was literally worked to death during the "Spanish flu" epidemic of 1918-1919—a violent virus which took many lives. He was wading rivers to reach his patients when he should have been in bed. When the flu hit him in January 1919, he only lived three days. My grandmother called Dr. Gaddy in Copperas Cove to come and treat her husband, but this was one little contest in their marriage she would lose. Dr. Hine pulled himself to the phone and told the Cove doctor not to come. "They need you there more than I. Don't worry about me."

For a few years the people of Oakalla expected a new doctor to appear, but better roads and fewer people doomed their hopes. The doctor's office stood empty for years and it was hard for them to accept the fact that medical instruments do not a surgeon make.

Although Dr. Hine has been gone fifty-five years, his spirit lingers on. When he died, Oakalla became a widow. The days agone are quickly brought back to the old-timers when his name is mentioned. "He did so much for our community," a lady recently said, "that when I hear the old gospel song 'Gathering Flowers for the Master's Bouquet' I always think of Dr. Lucius Hine."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### TEXAS BIRDS

Dr. Harry C. Oberholser, ornithologist for the U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey (later the Fish and Wildlife Service), began his study of Texas birds in the Big Bend area in 1901. When he retired forty years later, his manuscript on Texas birds had reached the astounding total of three million words. After a period of unsuccessful search for financial support in publishing the book, Mrs. Marrs McLean of San Antonio established the Corrie Herring Hooks Fund to honor her mother at the University of Texas for that purpose. Mrs. Hooks had heard Dr. Oberholser lecture many years before and as an amateur ornithologist furnished data to him. To make the publication possible it was necessary to reduce the three-million-word manuscript to one million words while retaining all essential facts and important scientific contributions. Dr. Oberholser, while disappointed by the decision to abridge his manuscript, worked on the editing until he died in 1963 at the age of ninety-three. Fortunately, Edgar B. Kincaid, Jr., the noted Texas ornithologist of Austin and a nephew of Mrs. J. Frank Dobie, had worked with Dr. Oberholser and after the author's death, was placed in full charge of the revision. That it took eleven more years to finish the job is just one indication of the tremendous task involved. *The Bird Life of Texas* (University of Texas Press, $60.00) is now available in two large volumes in a slip case—a million words plus numerous distribution maps and great illustrations from paintings (many in color) by Louis Agassiz Fuertes who had accompanied Dr. Oberholser to the Big Bend in 1901 and became one of the best of all of our Wildlife artists. While the importance of the final release of the set to Texas cannot be over emphasized, the occasion is nearly as important to the nation. After all, about two-thirds of all bird species known to occur in North America north of Mexico have been reported at one time or another in Texas and have been described with extreme care by Oberholser in his *The Bird Life of Texas*. Strongly recommended.

### MEXICAN FOLKLORE

*The Wonderful Chirrionera* and *Other Tales from Mexican Folklore* (Heidelberg Publishers, 4300 Shoalwood, Austin, Texas 78756, $5.95) is a book of delightful stories selected and edited by David L. Lindsey. These tales first appeared in *Puro Mexicano*, edited by J. Frank Dobie for the Texas Folklore Society in 1935, and have been changed editorially to make them more readily understood by the younger readers. The book is enhanced with woodcuts by Barbara Matthews Whitehead and is most attractive—recommended for young and old.

### BARS AND BAWDS

"An Amusing Account of the Saloons and Bawds of the Old West" is the descriptive sub-title of *Whiskey and Wild Women* (Hart Publishing Co., 15 West 4th St., New York City 10012, $15.00) by Cy Martin. The bars and the bawdy houses were there for the pay days of the trail drivers, the soldiers, the railroad builders, and the miners. There is an interesting section on the women of the mountain men. While the writing is spritely indeed, to this reviewer the illustrations highlighted the book. The number and quality of the photographs, plus reproductions of a number of old prints and drawings, including one by Frederic Remington, greatly enhance its value. Recommended.

**CORRECTION NOTICE**

The paperback price of the book, *Manna: Foods of the Frontier*, by Gertrude Harris, is $4.95. It was inadvertently listed at $2.95 in the December '74 TRUE WEST issue. Publisher—101 Productions, 834 Mission St., San Francisco, Ca. 94103.

### APACHES

Grenville Goodwin's *Among the Western Apache* (University of Arizona Press, $4.50) is a compendium of field letters edited by Morris E. Opler, a distinguished authority on Apaches. A leading anthropologist during the 1930s, Goodwin demonstrated his ability as a field researcher. His letters to his Opler, dealt with the Western Apache. He died prematurely at age 33, but his letters to Opler reveal basic facts about his social relationship to his own family and to his wife's mother, father, brothers and sisters. He described how agriculture greatly influenced Apache customs, taboos and marriage rites. We learn that land usually is inherited within the family group on the female side. This all-too-brief book is especially suitable for students and researchers interested in Apache life.

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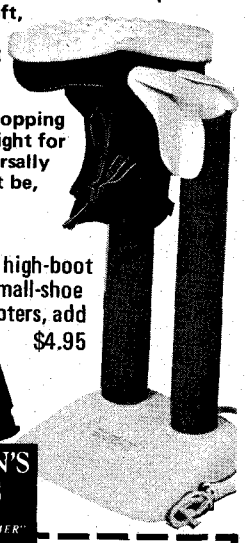

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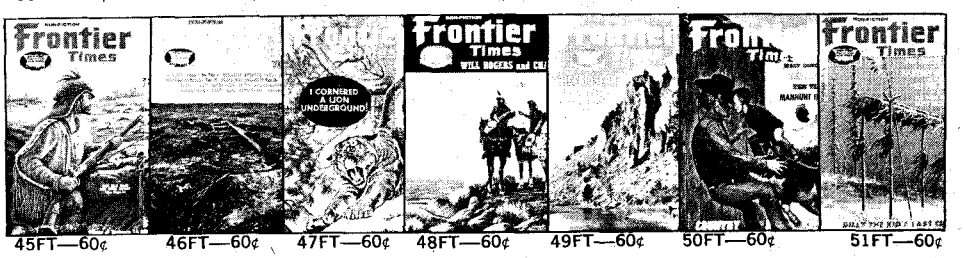

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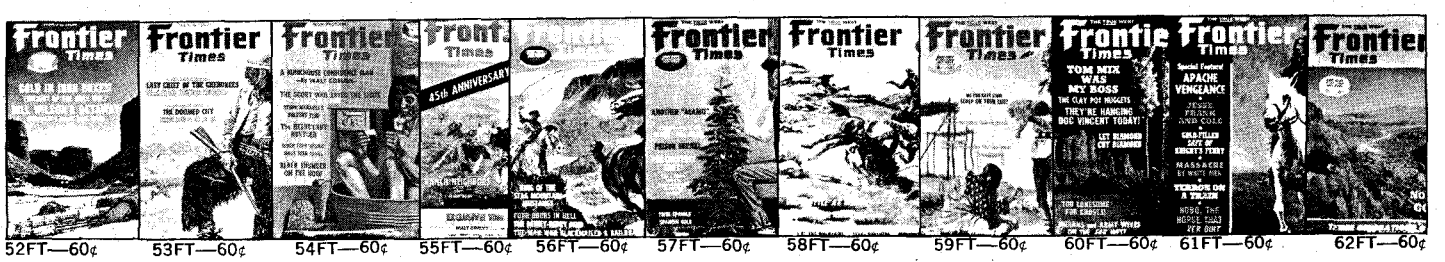

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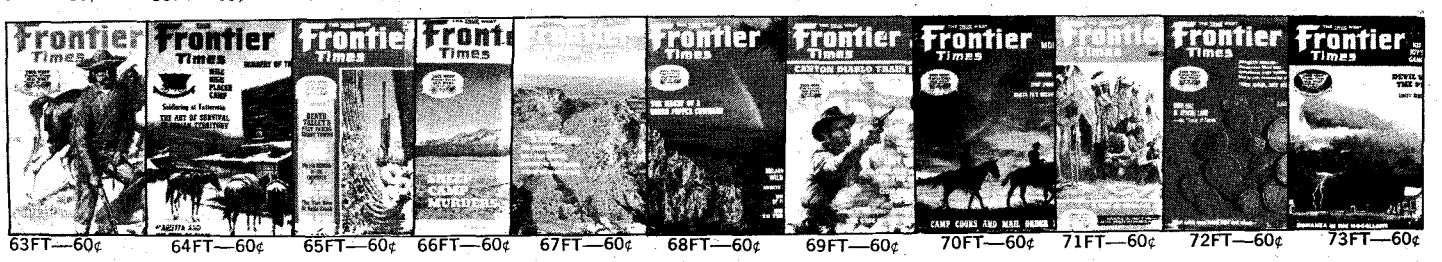

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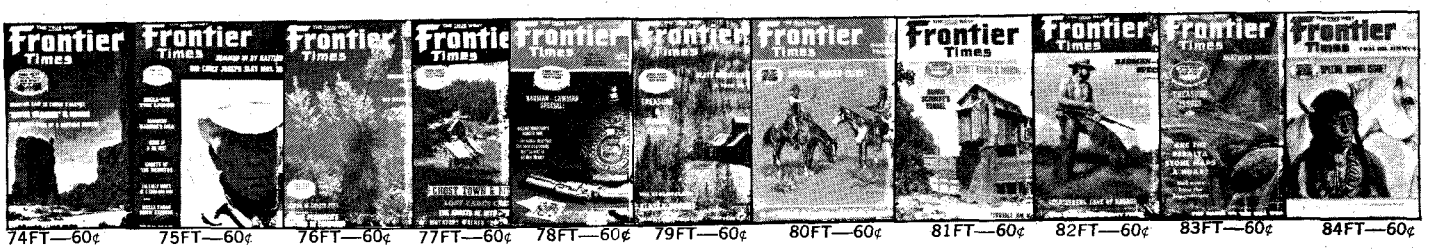

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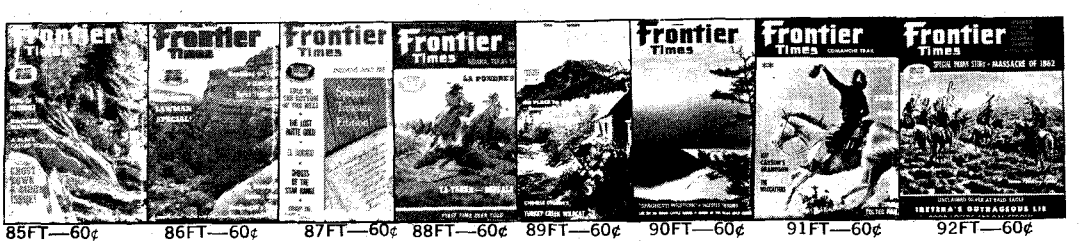

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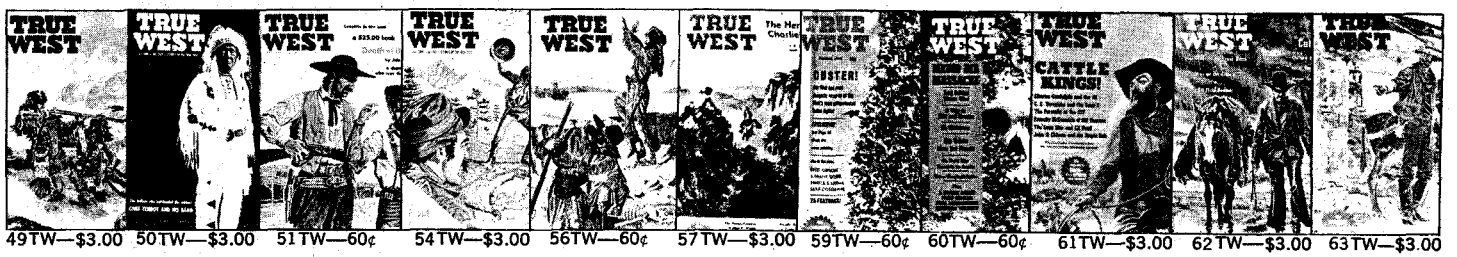

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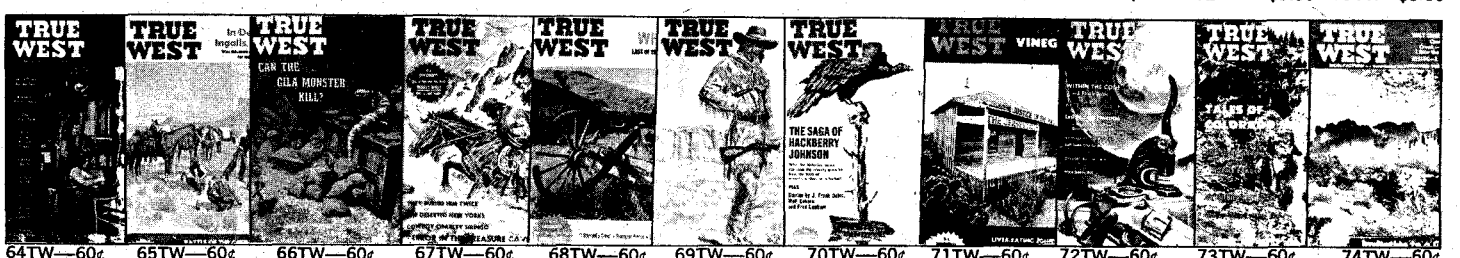

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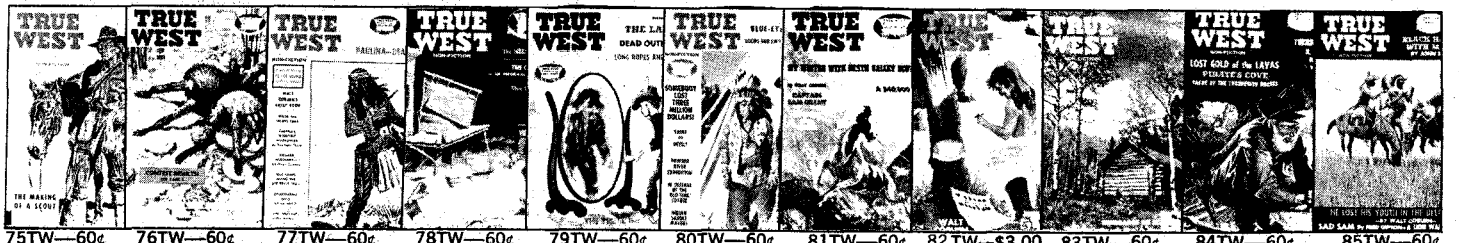

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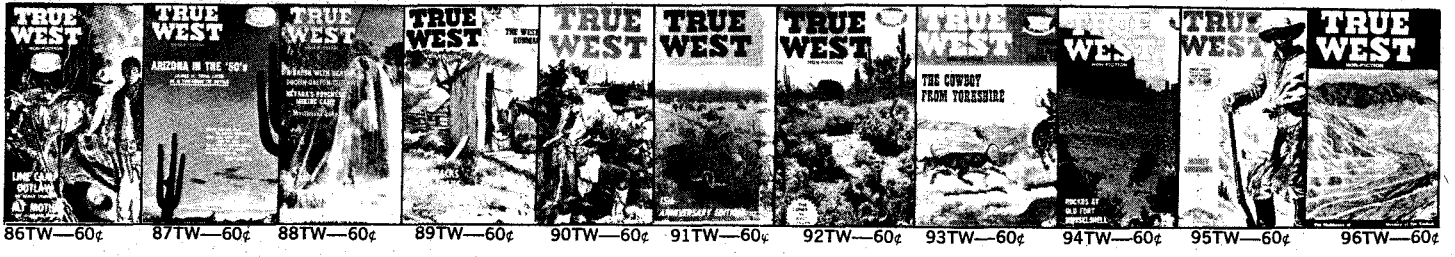

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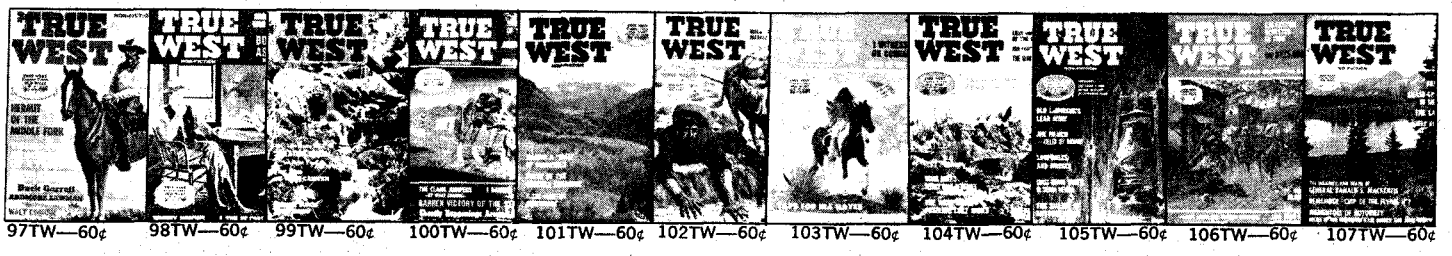

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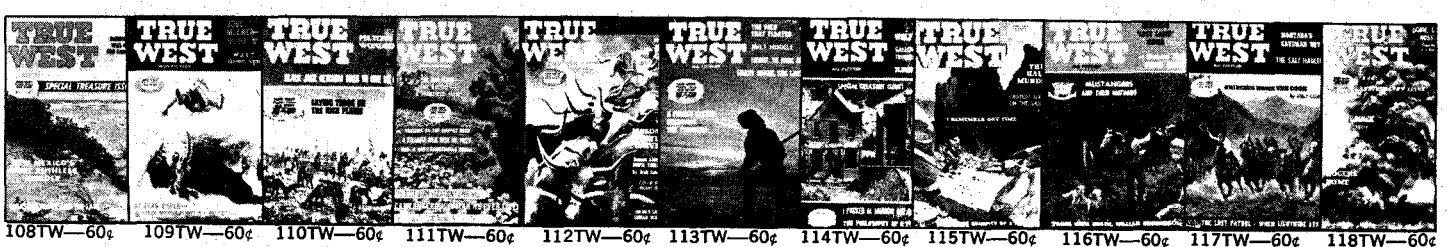

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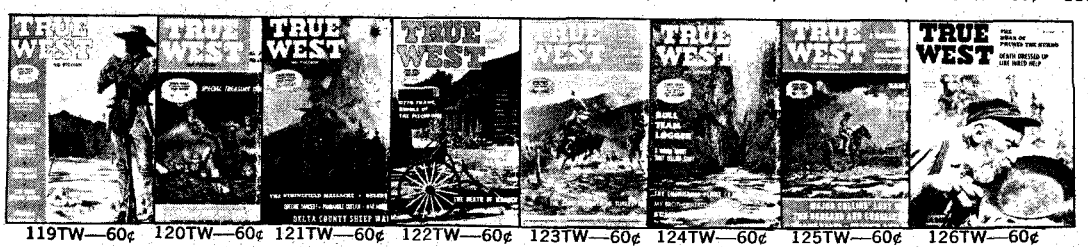

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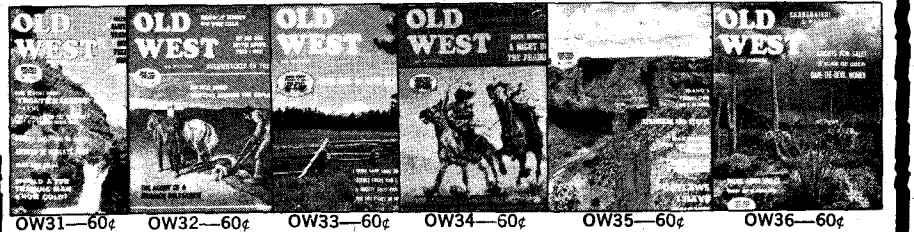

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## Localisms and Familyisms

*(Continued from page 19)*

by *receipts* instead of recipes, and if the new concoction was some kind of pudding Pa was liable to call it *pudgamalodgy*. The kitchen cupboard was the *safe*; and dishes more often got *renched* than rinsed. We always spoke of *fixing* breakfast rather than making or cooking it. Dinner was the noon meal, while lunch was something tied on the back of the saddle in a flour sack.

When telling us young'uns to do something, both Pa and Ma usually phrased it: "I wish you'd carry in some wood," or "You'd best go feed the cows before dark." But mild as these requests sounded, we knew we'd get *yamped* if we didn't mind. When turning a roped critter a-loose, or in any other real *rollicky* situation, we were advised to *take care* rather than to be careful. *Hold your horses* and *hold your 'tater* were reminders not to get too impatient, pushy, or over-eager.

I reckon we often said *set* for *sit* and *git* for *get*. Certainly a brooding female chicken was a *settin'* hen. "Git!" all by itself was an emphatic order to get out, go away, or go yonder fast. I reckon *lollypaloozer* for anything extraordinarily big, violent of otherwise *gollywhackin'* unusual was by no means an exclusive Barkerism, though I do sorter recollect that we used it a heap. I do surmise that *lollygaggin'* for over amorous behavior may have been a Barker exclusive. To us, *gumption* always meant common sense or intelligence, never its other definition—courage.

About anyone unduly lacking in gumption Pa often declared, "He ought to be bored for the simples," or "He don't know a hawk from a handsaw," with no apologies to Will Shakespeare whom he had never read. In disapproval of any one of those we currently call bad guys, Pa liked to say, "He ought to be shot with a packsaddle."

In an area of canyons and mountains blessed with many varieties of flowers, plants and trees, my folks simply ad-libbed appropriate names for some they didn't know. We called Colorado blue spruce *white spruce*, Douglas fir *red spruce*, aspens *quakin'-asps*, and white fir *balsam*. Mariposa lilies were *tulips*, cone flowers *marigolds*, and some little white, cup-like flowers growing in the moist meadows were *orange blossoms*. We called alders *witch hazels*. To us the deadly poisonous water hemlock growing so profusely along creeks and ditches was *wild parsnip*. The highly odorous medicinal plant which our Spanish speaking neighbors called *oshá* we called *angelico weed*. Ma's name for late blooming, wild purple asters was *farewell-summers*. I still like that one.

OF COURSE, some of our words and expressions may not have been as exclusively Barkerisms as I remember them. We may have learned some of them from neighbors, or even from strangers.

I'm not sure, but I rather think that localisms and familyisms were much more common in those long-gone days than they are today when everything



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**Pa and Ma Barker and eight of their children, about 1899. Author Omar Barker is in front, centered between his parents.**

has to be relevant, innovative or psychologically significant. I trust the foregoing examples do not seem to imply that my folk were ignoramuses. They were not. Both loved to read, especially the Bible.

My mother, Priscilla Jane McGuire Barker, with what would today be considered quite limited schooling, was an expert speller. She could read hymn music both for singing and playing on on our old-fashioned parlor organ. Her handwriting was clear, even and legible. Her personal letters were reasonably correct grammatically even if her spoken Barkerisms were not. She had been a great help to Pa in overcoming his almost total lack of schooling. And she was the Beulah, New Mexico postmaster as long as she lived.

My father, Squire Leander Barker, in his 'teens a two-year prisoner of the Yankees in the Civil War, never had more than a year of formal schooling in his life. Yet as far back as I can remember he was a contributor to several farm and religious magazines, local correspondent for the Las Vegas *Daily Optic*, and an ordained minister in the Church of Christ who didn't lack too much of knowing the four Gospels by heart. Yet the living he earned to give his young'uns schooling was as a hard-working farmer, cow rancher, orchardist, stone mason, blacksmith, truck gardener and sawmill man. Preaching and mountain lion (*cattymount*) hunting he managed to work in on the side.

I reckon we rustic Barkers were among the disadvantaged, but we didn't know it. The liberties we took with the English language may or may not have been picturesque or unusual enough to be worth reporting, but I ain't ashamed to admit that I recall some of them with considerable nostalgia. Words like ethnic, ecology, and traumatic were not in our vocabulary; and if anybody had mentioned "charisma," I'm afraid we would have surmised that it was some new kind of seven-year itch. Or ain't it?

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## Shall We Kill Frontier Times?

*(Continued from page 3)*

No. 1 *True West*. How many of you have read us for fifteen years? Ten Years? Five years?

I may be getting into something that will be hard to handle but I would like to publish the name of every single one of you folks who have been reading *True West, Frontier Times*, and *Old West* the longest. It would be really fascinating to see if someone started with the first issue of *True West* in 1953 and is still among our readers. If you have only been reading these magazines, or any one of them, for five years, don't let that stop you. Most publishers contend that their readership makes a complete turnover (all new readers) every five years. Personally, I don't believe this and I would like to disprove it right here and now.

So write in, by golly, and we will prove or disprove something that has been sort of a rule of thumb in the magazine publishing business as long as I can remember—but without any polls, facts, or anything else to back it up, insofar as I know. If all letters aren't answered, just remember old Hosstail stays up to a withered old neck in mail all the time and, fight as hard as I do to answer letters from you wonderful people who keep this old codger in business, I stay from four to five hundred letters behind—honest Injun.

Now let the letters roll in and bare your very soul. That is what has always kept us going and I think it always will. See you in April *True West*.—Hosstail

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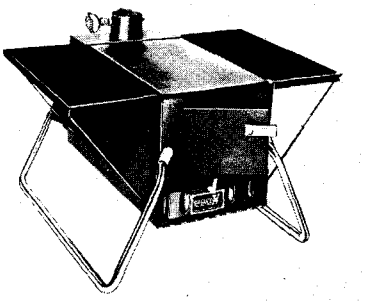

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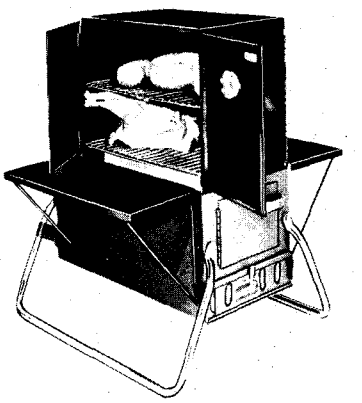

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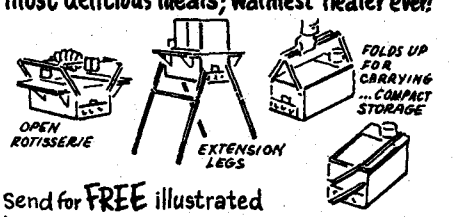


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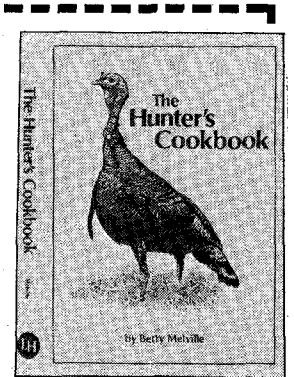


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## Fatal Strawberries

*(Continued from page 25)*

objects of their quest were in Bountiful. About 3:30 they were passing a string of vegetable wagons heading toward Salt Lake City when two heavily armed riders loomed out of the blackness. The officers realized that these were the men but before they could do anything, the two put the vegetable wagons between the police and themselves and galloped off into the gloom.

The officers wheeled their wagon around and gave chase. They could just make out the two figures in the dim light a little way ahead and whipped their team to a faster pace.

At the mouth of City Creek Canyon the two riders turned off and headed up the canyon. As the wagon could not follow them there, the driver was sent to get six horses. He returned a short time later, but with only two horses, not six. Janney and Donovan jumped on the animals' backs and rode off in pursuit. They soon spotted two riders in the early morning light and leveled their guns on them. To their relief it turned out to be Shannon and Pratt, two officers sent to guard the canyon.

Together the four rode on, hoping to find the two desperadoes. Suddenly a bullet whizzed over Pratt's head and the murderers were spotted on top of a rocky knoll. The officers took refuge behind their horses, so sparse was the cover, and were risking their hides staying to continue the fight.

Then suddenly, for some reason known only to them, the boys made a dash for their horses in an attempt to escape. Perhaps they were low on ammunition. As they were mounting up, a shot from Shannon's rifle dropped one of the animals. The boys disappeared into the brush and the canyon was quiet again.

The police combed the sage but to no avail. Later, the search was expanded to the entire canyon and beyond, but they seemed to have vanished into thin air.

Rumors began to fly again, and the press—particularly the *Deseret Evening News*—criticized the police and accused them of bungling the case. The *News* led its story on the 2nd with: "Wanted—Two yellow-backed literature friends, purloiners of strawberries, takers of horses, and slayers of men." Wanted also—"A couple of average officers such as it is said the New Woman would make, to catch them."

While this was going on, the police were checking out the only good lead they had, that the boys had been seen by several reliable people in the Mill Creek area. Never before had there been a manhunt like this in Utah. The brush was teeming with lawmen of all kinds. Bloodhounds were used in an attempt to flush out the quarry but to no avail.

The search at Mill Creek went on all of the 2nd and most of the 3rd. When nothing was turned up it was concluded that the boys had given the police the slip again and had escaped for good.

They were wrong. Both outlaws had been nearby all the time, lying low and hoping they wouldn't be discovered. Several times the police came so close that the boys were prepared to shoot had another step closer been taken. Once a bloodhound sniffed at the bush the boys were under, and Coughlin pushed the dog away with his rifle.

ON THE evening of the 3rd Coughlin and George made their way down to Murray and found what they were looking for, two horses left unattended in front of a saloon. Minutes later they were on their way again, heading west into Tooele County. They rode all night and all of the following day. The evening of the 4th they passed through the town of Third Term.

Lou Barras of that town followed them and when they bedded down for the night in South Willow Canyon, he rode hard to Grantsville, nine miles to the north. A huge posse was organized and headed south in a hurry. The men vowed that this would be the last stop on the outlaws' trail and that they would either be dead or in jail the next day.

Early on the morning of the 5th nearly fifty men had the campsite surrounded. A volley sent the outlaws diving for the brush. Soon Coughlin crept out of the sage and surrendered. Shortly thereafter George joined his companion and gave himself up.

They were whisked away to jail and a quick hearing was held on the 7th before Commissioner Morris Sommer who ordered them bound over for trial.

Trial was held in the district court in Ogden. The defense lawyers faced an impossible task as witness after witness testified against their clients. On October 26, 1895 the jury returned a verdict of guilty on two counts of first-degree murder.

At the sentencing on November 6 George received a life sentence on the jury's recommendation. Coughlin was sentenced to death. When asked what form of death he preferred, as Utah law required, he replied, "I'll take lead." The court ordered him shot by a firing squad.

An appeal to the Supreme Court was denied. On December 9, 1896 final sentencing took place. Coughlin's execution was to be on the 15th in Sage Hollow, deep in the wilds of Rich County three miles north of Woodruff and near the scene of the crime he committed.

That fateful day dawned cold and blustery with a fresh fall of snow on the ground that crunched under the wheels of the wagon taking Pat Coughlin to his appointment in Sage Hollow. There was a wind from the north, a cold gusty wind that flapped the walls of the tent that stood in the middle of an open sage flat, dreary under the overcast skies. Inside the tent were five men, and each had a rifle. Inside each rifle was a bullet, four live and one blank. Facing the tent about thirty feet distant was a chair staked to the ground. In a few minutes Pat Coughlin would sit there for the last time.

Coughlin had but one request when he arrived, and that was that no pictures of him be taken. He was a little pale, but calm, as he was strapped into the chair.

Father Gallagher of Park City gave Coughlin the rites of absolution of the Catholic Church. As the blindfold was



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being lowered over Pat's eyes, the priest told him, "Keep your courage up, my boy. It will soon be over."

"You bet your life," replied Coughlin.

A doctor pinned a small target over Coughlin's heart and stepped back. Someone began to count slowly. At three—five rifles cocked. At six—they slid through five slits in the wall of the tent and took aim. At ten—there was gunfire, and Pat Coughlin stiffened. Father Gallagher was at his side in an instant giving him the last rites.

Pat Coughlin paid the ultimate penalty for his crimes. Maybe it would have happened, even if he hadn't been tempted by that fatal quart of strawberries.

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## Lost Gold at Robbers Roost

*(Continued from page 15)*

tion. It was less than a day's ride from there to Los Angeles.

Rain clouds had been threatening all day, but so far all the storms had hit in the higher mountains. Huge thunderheads hung like a shroud over the towering peaks. Now and then a deep roll of thunder rumbled in the distance.

The station at Freeman Junction was located at the edge of a wash. A tiny trickle of water wound its way around the boulders and down the side of the hill. The passengers rested inside the station, trying to find a little relief from the hot, sultry air that engulfed them. They considered themselves very fortunate that the heavy rain was falling in the high levels and not on them.

Outside, in the dull gray light, the driver sprawled across the seat of the coach and dozed fitfully. He rested one foot on the strongbox to be sure that no one tampered with its $25,000 contents while he slept.

Meanwhile, high up in the mountains, heavy rains had saturated the earth until it could hold no more. Above Freeman Junction swollen lakes overflowed into rapidly filling streams. These in turn were feeding into the very wash that bordered the station. Faster and faster the water rose, picking up huge boulders as it roared down the mountainside.

Outside the station, Eb tended the horses and reassured them against the great rumbles of thunder. He checked occasionally to be sure that no one went near the stagecoach where the driver slept. Then gradually, almost unconsciously, he became aware of a rumble so great that it shook the very ground under him. Eb stood still, trying to judge where it was coming from and what it was.

The roar grew louder, and panic gripped his heart with icy fingers. He turned toward the mountain just in time to see a fifteen-foot wall of water and rock come thundering out of the high end of the wash.

There was no time to warn anyone. The station was right in its path. The horses pulled free and bolted before he could mount one of them. There was only one chance left. He shouted at the top of his voice, hoping against hope that the others would hear it, but knowing all the while that it was already too late.

Eb scrambled toward the high side of the wash. If he could get far enough up the side of the hill, he might have a chance. He heard an ear-splitting crash and turned just in time to see the station shoved from its foundation, then lifted and rolled into splinters. A fraction of a second later the entire rubble smashed into the stagecoach with the sleeping driver still sprawled across the seat protecting the strongbox and its contents.

Hysterically, Eb continued his rush up hill, but the raging torrent caught up with him. He was knocked unconscious by the debris. When he regained his senses, he was lying half in and half out of the rushing water. He had no idea how he had gotten there, but at least he was alive. He was bruised and battered, and he ached all over, but he was all in one piece and for that he was grateful.

As it turned out, Eb was the only survivor. He stared in disbelief at the spot where the station had been. Only a few scattered boards and the stone foundation remained.

Then he remembered the strongbox with its $25,000 treasure. He searched hard and long before leaving the scene, but never found a trace of that iron box. It had obviously been buried in the sand and rock that rushed down the mountain on that fateful night.

MANY treasure hunters since have gone searching for this elusive box. Frank Fish found a rusted pistol, a lock, some cartridges, and a pair of French binoculars at the site; and various metal stagecoach parts have been located in the area, but so far, no one has found the metal strongbox with its gold.

The old stage stop was located near the present-day southern end of California State Highway 395, a half-mile or so from Freeman. It was north of a hill called Robbers Roost, just above where an aqueduct now crosses the wash. At last checking, the ruins of the old station's foundation were still visible, but barely.

A good topographic map will help pinpoint the area and can be obtained from the United States Department of Geological Survey for less than a dollar. Maybe today's modern metal detector can succeed where years of searching and digging have failed. I'm convinced that—someday—someone will walk out of that wash a rich man.

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## Truly Western

*(Continued from page 4)*

Washington, D. C. to be picked from for the name. The post office department wrote back saying those names were already in use and picked the name of a man who lived in Washington, D. C. True, there were Indian families by the name of High Shield near Hisle, but their names were never mentioned. I've lived here at Hisle since I was a boy of about seventeen. I helped build my parents' home and store and post office at Hisle. My mother was postmistress until 1956 when she retired. My mother-in-law then became postmistress and served for fifteen years before she retired. Then my brother-in-law ran it until it closed in 1971. There is, however, still a small grocery store there at Hisle, run by my in-laws the Beckers.

I still live only five miles from Hisle although my address is now Wanblee, and the mail comes to us on a Star Route. Just had to write and set you straight on the information about Hisle.—Vance W. Larmer, Wanblee, South Dakota 57577

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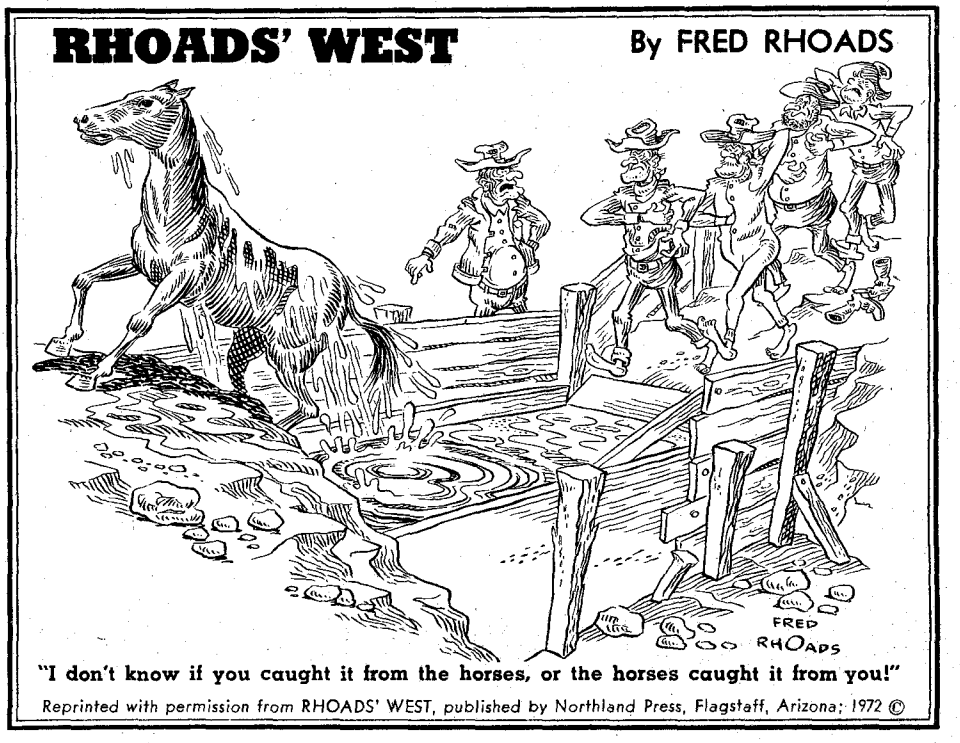


"I don't know if you caught it from the horses, or the horses caught it from you!"

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59—Red Man's Wireless, 14x7
60—Roping a Wolf, 11x8½
61—Smoking Them Out, 11x10
62—Scattering the Riders, 11½x8
63—Trail of the Iron Horse, 16x11½
64—Sun Worshippers, 16x10½
65—Serious Predicament, 15x8½
66—Single Handed, 14x9½
67—Slick Ear, 14x11½
68—Smoke of a .45, 12x9
69—Sage Brush Sport, 13½x8½
70—Signal Fire, 11x14
71—When Red Man Talks War, 13½x9½
72—In Enemy Country, 13½x9½
73—The Medicine Man, 11x8½
74—Trail's End, 13½x9½
75—The Holdup, 13x8
76—The Bolter, 9½x13½
77—The Attack, 12x8
78—The Drifter, 16x11½
79—The Tenderfoot, 11x8
80—Two of a Kind Win, 13½x9½
81—Last of 5,000, 8x9½
82—When Tracks Spell Meat, 13½x9½
83—When the Nose of a Horse Beats the Eyes of a Man, 13½x9½
84—When Ignorance is Bliss, 11x14
85—Wild Horse Hunters (cowboys), 14x9
86—Wild Horse Hunters (Indians), 12½x8
87—Whose Meat?, 13½x9½
88—Wagon Boss, 16x9½
89—When Mules Wear Diamonds, 13½x9½
90—A Crow Chief, 7x9
91—When the Trail Was Long Between Camps, 10½x6½
92—Where Ignorance is Bliss, 10½x6 (Cartoon)
93—When Sioux & Blackfeet Meet, 15x8½
94—Warning Shadows, 10½x7
95—When Horse Flesh Comes High, 15x8½
96—Wound Up, 11x8½
97—The Scouts (Indians) 9½x7
98—Winter Packet, 15x7
99—Mourning Her Warrior Dead, 11x8½
100—When Horses Turn Back There's Danger Ahead, 14x9½
101—The Buffalo Hunt (1898), 13½x9½
102—Cowboy Sport, 13½x9½
103—A Desperate Stand, 13½x9½
104—Rider of the Rough String, 13½x9½
105—Land of Good Hunting, 16x11½
106—The Fire Boat, 16x11½
107—Our Warriors Return, 16x11½
108—When Wagon Trails Were Dim, 13½x9½

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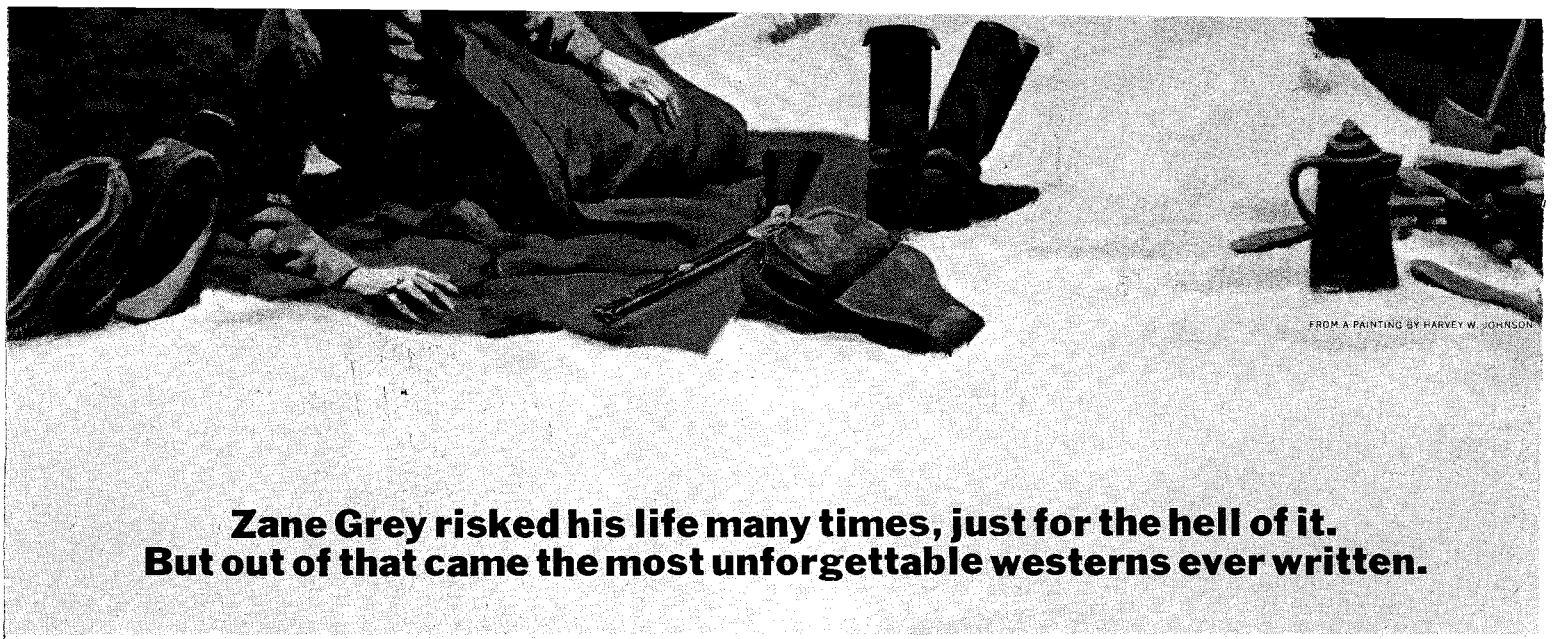


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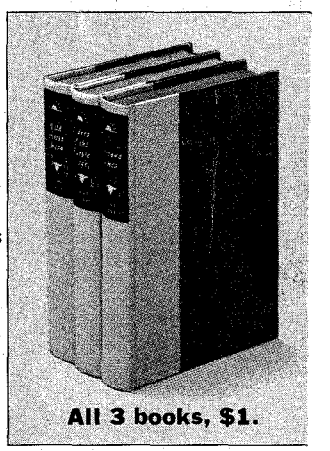


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